

727 counted coup on the enemy filled a pipe, and held it for the rest of the party to smoke as they stood in a row. The returning war-party, if [554] successful, always painted black, but if a member of their own party had been killed, they returned without rejoicing; unless sometimes, when the [302] loss of the enemy had been greater than their own, and a relative of the dead was in the party, he might say, "One of the enemy pays for my relative. On account of the others, let us enjoy ourselves." Then the party would paint black, and celebrate. Wounds received by members of the war-party would not prevent celebration, unless, of course, they resulted fatally, and they were always regarded as an honor.

726 Some war-parties started off publicly in broad daylight, having made it known that they were going; and any one who wished joined. Sometimes, perhaps, two men would agree to go, and invited such others to accompany them as they wished. Women not infrequently went with the war-parties. If a man was killed in war, his relatives, especially his parents, [765] mourned for him. His father might go to the tent of a renowned warrior, and cry until this man became angry and announced a day for a party to start out to obtain revenge. On the day set, the party left publicly, usually on horseback.

751 A man's supernatural war paraphernalia are shown in Figs. 27, 28, and 237. They were obtained from a middle-aged man who had them from his 726 grandfather, who first dreamed of the magpie and the other animals connected with the paraphernalia, and made the objects. A cylindrical rawhide case (Fig. 27), such as is found used for holding feathers and medicine 718 among most Plains tribes, is painted with a yellow, green, and blue design resembling porcupine designs. These colors represent the various colors of the birds that were dreamed of by the original owner, and whose feathers are kept in the case. The case is called the "house" of these objects. A wing-bone is attached to the outside of the case to make another whistle from in case of loss of the finished whistle included in the outfit. A small bag containing a necklace is kept in the case. The bag (Fig. 28, a) is ornamented with bead-work representing a frog (kaka^u). This frog was part of the original owner's dream. The necklace (Fig. 28, b) has various wasöö ("medicine-roots") on it. These are said to be neither eaten nor otherwise used, except as they are worn on the necklace. The bone whistle (Fig. 28, c) alluded to is attached to a necklace of otter-skin. It is blown during the fighting to prevent injury. A magpie's skin (Fig. 28, d) and the skin of a smaller bird (Fig. 29, a) are also contained in the case. The white magpie-feathers are dyed yellow. The two skins are worn at the back of the head, and prevent the wearer being injured even in a hand-to-hand fight. A head-dress of ten magpie-feathers and of a white plume on red-painted

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bag is given to the horse to prevent its becoming exhausted. A cloth to wrap the various feathers and the whistle completes the outfit.

A warrior's outfit that was obtained for the Museum (specimen Museum No. 50-1862 a-c) consists of a beaded knife-scabbard, carried because the owner has cut loose horses that were tied by a rope leading into a tent; of a man's awl-case, carried presumably for mending moccasins and for

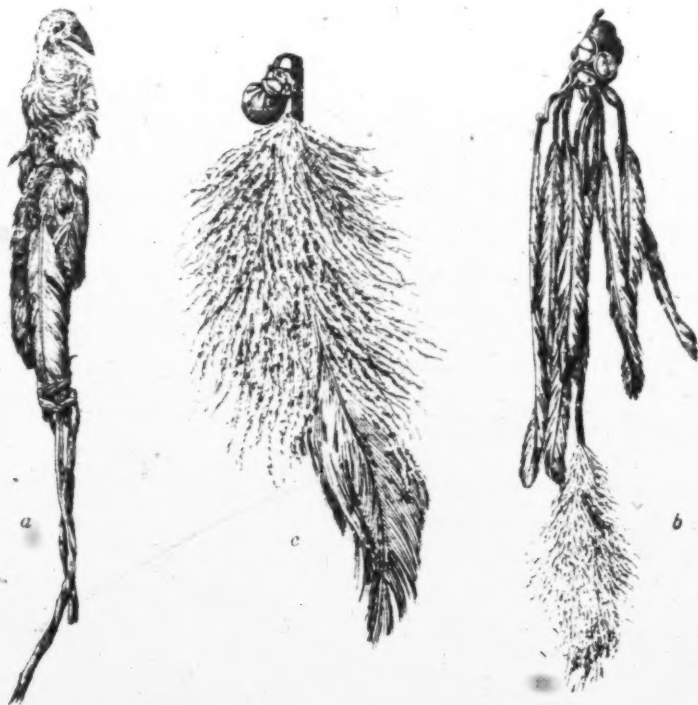


Fig. 29 (50-1952, f, g, h). War Paraphernalia. Lengths, 32 cm., 20 cm., 20 cm.

similar purposes; and of a piece of a scalp ornamented with beads, and worn attached to the shoulder of his shirt. The scabbard is ornamented with rectangular U-shaped bead-work designs similar to those in Fig. 3, and representing horse-tracks.

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Sometimes in dreaming, a man saw a person in battle wearing the skin of a certain animal, and fighting very successfully. He would then wear the skin of that animal. Specimen Museum No. 50-1901 is a weasel-skin

293 used in this way. The owner twice dreamed of a weasel, which told him to
 726 use its skin. Thereupon he first wore a weasel-skin in dances, and later
 751 carried it to war. Subsequently he lent it to his son and to other men who
 778 went to war, and they always returned successfully.

A man to whom a fisher had appeared in a dream or vision used a fish-skin medicine-bag, and on going to war carried this with him.

[787] A renowned warrior, dead for some time, received his personal medicine from the bears, and was forbidden to scalp, count coup on the enemy, or take away a gun. He could only kill. He once killed two Sioux with one shot, at a place which received its name from the event.

[442] A simple riding-whip (specimen Museum No. 50-1821) has on its wooden handle four red marks, each of which is said to represent an enemy struck in the face with a whip in battle.

532 Representations, used in the modern "war-dance," of the weapons of
 726 Black-Wolf, a well-known Gros Ventre warrior, part of whose experiences in war are told below, consist of a shield and spear. The shield, which is made of painted white cloth, represents the shield carried by him on an occasion when he rushed to battle with no other weapon. The shield is decorated with a blue crescent along the lower edge, representing the sun, and bordered by a wavy red line denoting lightning. The wooden spear and spear-point

[822] represent a spear with which the owner stabbed a Piegan in battle. The spear-point is painted blue and red; the blue representing iron, the red blood. Red marks on the handle of the spear represent coups.

[292] A pair of beaded and painted moccasins executed by a woman, but designed by an old man, symbolize his exploits in war. An outside rim of beading represents the enemy's camp-circle. In the middle of the camp-circle is beaded the figure of a tent belonging to a chief. To this tent was tied a horse, which the wearer of the moccasins cut loose. This feat is represented by an outline painting of a horse and halter. Three U-shaped figures, also painted, are horse-tracks, and represent the capture of horses. On the other moccasin there are again three such figures in a row, which here were said to indicate a charge on horseback on the camp; while two other such figures, facing each other, indicate a face-to-face fight.

Curtains hanging behind the bed in front of the tent-wall were sometimes painted to illustrate the owner's achievements in war.

WAR-EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS.

114 The following narratives give an entirely personal account of the war-
 115 experiences of three individuals, two of them men of about sixty years of

159 prairie, and he followed and met her. This she did three or four times,
 226 until he was very much in love with her and wanted to marry her. She said
 that if he would go with her, she would marry him. He was afraid of the
 Gros Ventre. Then the Crow told us to go in advance, in order that he
 might go with them. The whites distributed food, guns, ammunition, and
 blankets among us all. Then we Gros Ventre went off, but lay down behind
 a ridge. The Crow gave the Blood four horses for himself and his wife,
 and they started to go to the Missouri. The man whose wife this woman
 was pretended that she was not his wife. He rode alongside, and, when the
 Blood's attention was directed elsewhere, killed him. Then we Gros Ventre
 and those of the Crow with us came out from where we had been hiding
 behind the hill, and danced, while the remaining Crow brought his scalp.
 From there we went home. We crossed the Missouri at a place called
 Magpie Tail, where there are steep hills. We came on a Crow camp, and
 made a charge on it. One of the Crow charged into it, striking and whip-
 ping every one, as if out of his senses. One of the men in-camp became
 angry, pulled him off his horse, hit him, kicked him, and pulled his hair.
 The man who had charged got up laughing.

WATCHES-ALL'S NARRATIVE.

Once I gambled with a Crow woman and lost my beads, and my mother
 made me cry. The next day a war-party started out, and, because my
 mother had made me cry, I went with them. All of the party were on foot,
 except two (women?) on horseback. After we had stopped for the night
 twice, my mother came after me with a horse for me to ride. We went
 northward against the Piegan. When we came to mountains, all the
 women in the party went out to pick choke-cherries. The road was impass-
 able from mud, and it was stormy. Some young men climbed the moun-
 tain to look for camps. It was snowing hard and they could not see far;
 but in the afternoon it cleared, and with a telescope they could see a camp
 in the distance. They measured it with a ramrod. They went back to the
 party howling like coyotes, and zigzagging in their course. The women in
 the party stood in line, and sang. When they came near, the scouts rode
 about in a circle until one of the party went to them and brought them.
 Then they reported what they had seen. Then the whole party painted
 and danced and sang, preparing for the fight. In the evening we started,
 and travelled all night. One man had a ghost-bone (a human femur).

• [787] While I was asleep, he summoned the ghost. "What is it?" said the ghost.
 "Are there many people in the Piegan camp?" asked the man. The ghost
 said, "There are as many as grass. I give you two persons, also some horses

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to steal. Let those who are on foot go back from here, and let the few who are mounted go on against the camp. They will do well, and kill two people, and capture horses. But if all go, a great many will be killed." The next morning my mother told me this. The party, however, were not influenced at all by what the ghost said, and went on. When we came near, two young men killed a Piegan called Sits-in-the-Middle and his wife. Then our party killed two more Piegan close by their camp, but, as one of the men stooped to strike the fallen Piegan, the Piegan stabbed him in the back over the kidney, making a hole large enough to breathe through. We tied him around with gunny sacks. Thus we killed three men and a woman. Then all the Piegan attacked us. I saw more people than ever before. They came like ants, and the smoke hung as over a smelter. Two of the Gros Ventre drove all of our party, even the women, against the Piegan to make them fight. A Gros Ventre was shot through the thigh-bone, and fell from his horse. He stuck his crooked lance in the ground and sat there; and all his brothers went to help him so that he would not be killed soon. And all the Piegan attacked him. Just as one of them dashed up to strike him, he raised his gun and shot him. Another and another came up, until he had killed six. Then he himself was killed. Then some of the Gros Ventre said, "Let us lead them after us from their camp." The Gros Ventre started to run, and the Piegan pursued. The Gros Ventre who were mounted ran their horses as hard as they could. They never stopped running, and a great many of those who were on foot were killed. I was riding behind another woman. Our horse stepped into a hole, and pitched forward. The woman was thrown off, but I was thrown into the saddle. The horse started up again, but stepped on his bridle, which checked him. A Piegan rode up and struck me with his gun. Then he took my wrist, and I dismounted as he did. Another one came, and, after striking me too, took off my head necklace. The one who had captured me took me back as far as it is from here to the river (about thirty miles). We saw bodies of Gros Ventre as we went back to camp. We came to the camp about noon. Everybody struck me. All day they came and hit me, and one man hit me on the forehead and nearly killed me. A Piegan woman tied up my head. I wore a fine dress covered with elk-teeth. I took it off, and a Piegan woman took it away. Then the Piegan directed their people to gather all the captives. They asked them if the Gros Ventre had done anything to Sits-in-the-Middle, who had been found in an indecent position with his wife. The captives all said that the Gros Ventre would not do such a thing, and the Piegan were satisfied. Eight Piegan, all prominent men, had been killed.

When our party returned, my father asked where I was. Some one told him that a Piegan had taken me back to his camp. Then my father said

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to death. We turned and ran back and picked her up, and ran on until we reached the store. The Sioux and the white man exchanged shots, but they were too far apart. The Sioux went on and killed a white man who was employed in cutting wood for the steamboats, and who had just shot a bear. They laid this man in the fire and burned him up, so that only his legs were found. After this we women were afraid to go even a very short distance from the store. Then the Crow swam their horses to the north side of the river. In the river a white horse stopped, went down, came up again, and went down; a baxaa" took it.

Then my mother said that she was tired of staying there, and with a Gros Ventre, Bull-Lodge (there being ten of us in all, six men and four women), we went down the river on the boat. Then the boat stuck and had to back. The buffalo crossed the Missouri, and the whites on board caught them by the horns, cut their throats, and dragged them ashore. Then we had a big feast of ribs and paunches and the best parts. We went on, and stopped at the mouth of Milk River. There Bull-Lodge set up his tent, but I and my mother slept on the boat. The next day we all went up Milk River on foot; only Bull-Lodge and his wife were on horses. We kept on the trail, and came to a recent camp-site. The Gros Ventre and Assiniboine were then at war. One of our party, looking back and seeing some persons coming, asked Bull-Lodge for his horse to scout. Riding back, he saw that six buffalo were coming towards us. That evening Bull-Lodge and his wife went on, while the rest of us went to sleep where we were. Bull-Lodge travelled during the night and reached the Gros Ventre camp, where the old men were still awake smoking. He told my brother that my mother and I were behind and that he had better bring us and the others horses. Then the people came and brought us, and all were glad to see us again.

PERSONAL SUPERNATURAL POWERS.

Men went out to fast with the intention of becoming doctors, or receiving miraculous powers. They did not go as boys, but after they had reached manhood. Not all men tried to acquire such powers, and some of those that did failed. They went to hills and high places, usually high up on mountains, among the rocks above the timber. In such a place they would make a shelter in which to sleep. Then they remained fasting and without drinking water for one or two or more often four or five nights. A Crow who staid seven nights and nearly died, being extremely thin when he returned, was regarded as extremely powerful. It was thought that he could accomplish almost any wish by merely expressing it. Besides fasting, a man cried

787 incessantly. After a time a spirit might appear to him. Perhaps this would be on the first or second night, perhaps later. Sometimes it was in full daylight, and the man really saw the spirit like a true person; but more usually he saw him in his sleep. It might be a person that appeared, that is to say, an untrue person (spirit), or an animal, or the spirit of a rock or of the brush. Some men went to islands and rivers instead of to mountain-peaks. These might receive the otter, or the beaver, or the muskrat, or the water-monster (bax'aaⁿ) as their guardian spirit. Sometimes when a man was crying on a mountain-top in a thunderstorm, the thunder (bax'aaⁿ) appeared to him. The lightning shot straight towards him, as if to hit him, and the bird was so near above his head that the man sometimes became afraid and ran away. If he staid, the thunder-bird became his spirit, and gave him medicine that was unusually powerful. Generally, it seems, the man cried incessantly, until he was exhausted and fell asleep. Then the spirit appeared to him, saying, "I pity you. What do you want?" The man said that he wished to be wealthy, or successful in war or love, or to become a medicine-man. If he was to be a doctor, the spirit showed him roots and plants, telling him to note their appearance, and informing him of the diseases for which they were a cure. Those plants that he had seen in his dream or vision, the new doctor looked for until he found them. His spirit told him, "In so many years (naming the number) you will begin to doctor." After that time had elapsed, he began doctoring. The spirit or animal told him that the place where he was was its own home. From this time on, the man never killed the animal that had appeared to him (except, apparently, for the purpose of obtaining parts of it as a fetish or amulet); nor did he eat of it under any circumstances. He used a part of the animal, especially the claws or the fur, in his doctoring. If the spirit of a rock had appeared to him, he used a stone.

755 Medicine-men cured the sick by sucking the body and by brushing it. As is customary among Indians, they were believed to suck through the skin without biting, cutting, or puncturing it. They might suck blood, pebbles, cloth, human finger-nails, bunches of hair, and many other things. If they sucked out old pus, it was evidence that the disease was of long standing. If they brushed or rubbed the patient, they used owl-feathers, skunk-skin, prairie-dog-fur, or similar parts of animals. Some used bells as rattles, some whistles, and some drums; and all sang, each doctor having his own songs. After sucking the patient, the doctor chewed up medicine, which he then applied to the patient's body. He often also gave him medicine boiled in water to drink. The powers of doctors varied. Different men were able to cure different diseases. It is said, however, that none could do much for affections of the ear.

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Doctors were paid a horse or more for their services. Sometimes several, 756 in turn, doctored a patient, each one blaming those that had failed before. Often they laid the sickness to spirits, or to other doctors. This last occurred especially if in their sucking they extracted human finger-nails or similar objects. In such a case the doctor got his patient to sleep. The patient might then in his dream see the person that had made him sick, and on awaking would denounce him. If the sick man died, his relatives might kill the doctor whom he had named as the cause of his sickness.

There were not so many women doctors as men. They appear not to have gone out to the mountains with the intention of acquiring supernatural power, but to have received guardian spirits when they were away from the camp, mourning.

The jugular and femoral arteries and the aorta were called ts'niinotanoudj¹ ("having no ears"), because, when severed, they did not heed any remedies.

In order to save the life of a sick relative, the joint of the little finger was sometimes cut off in sacrifice to the sun.

There were some medicine-men who, having had their fingers tied, then had their knees fastened together and their hands secured behind their back. After this they were wrapped in a robe and the robe was wound about with a rope. Then such a medicine-man called his spirit. When it appeared, he was loosened instantaneously, and the robe and the rope were thrown at the man that tied him.

A charm used by a doctor is shown in Fig. 30. It consists of a deer-tail 756 with beaded base, and of two black feathers and a bunch of down feathers. 778 All parts of the object are reddened. This piece was used to brush patients. At other times during the doctoring it was worn on the medicine-man's clothing.

A man unsuccessful in winning a woman's love sometimes fasted on a 787

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Fig. 30 (50 1937). Doctor's Charm. Length, 22 cm.

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787 mountain and asked the spirit that appeared to him for a love-medicine
832 which would bring him the woman. Soon after, she would come to him and
try to obtain his love, but usually he would reject her, for a time at least,
by way of revenge.

A young middle-aged man of the present time is noted for his love-medicine. He tells the following. He was once in love with a woman who only reviled him. For a long time this was on his mind. Constantly thinking of her harsh treatment of him, he fasted in a number of places, and finally received supernatural power. Then the woman came to him. She kissed him on the cheek; but he said, "You have abused me," and he made her go away. Four times she came to him; only the fourth time did he consent to gratify her wishes. Since that time, he has frequently used his medicine. His present wife was living with a white trader, where she had every comfort and great abundance; but by his medicine he made her leave the trader for him. His wife, it would appear, looks upon his powers without jealousy. He sells the use of his medicine to young men for two horses. His young son is crippled, so that he would have difficulty in winning women; but his father is keeping the medicine for him, so that he will be able to possess any woman he desires. The objects used include several medicine-plants. Some of these appear to be used to incense the man who is making the medicine. When a woman is unusually obdurate, wild parsnip (the root supposed to produce the peculiar state of mind of the crazy-dance) is employed by this man. When he begins to exert his influence on a woman, she becomes restless and sexually excited. She leaves the tent frequently, and will cohabit with any man. When the influence of the medicine is removed, she remains faithful to her lover.

MEDICINES AND PLANTS.

278 The following medicines, consisting chiefly of plants, are almost wholly
757 family remedies, and, while no doubt also used by medicine-men, their
supposed effects are generally known, and not connected with any personal
supernatural experiences of the person using them. As the specimens were
secured in winter, it was impossible to obtain material for botanical identification.

Wanouwascö ("wart-medicine"), a root, is used for stomach-ache (specimen Museum No. 50-1800).

A root called ahaa'tjiiniqua ("wood-like") is used for colic. This seems to be the root of a species of *Asclepias* (specimen Museum No. 50-1830).

A root called baaso ("red medicine," because it is reddish when fresh) is used for diarrhoea (specimen Museum No. 50-1914).

796 painting, an old man took the lead, followed by the pledger, and he by the dancers in file. All the dancers carried small hoops ornamented with quill-embroidery and with small feathers. These hoops were carried on sticks. When the old man stopped, the dancers gathered in a circle about him to dance. They took hold of the corners of their robes, and flapped them like wings, buzzing and humming like mosquitoes. After they had

done this four times, they lay on the ground on their faces. Beyond the small hoops there seem to have been no regalia. There were also neither whistles, rattles, nor drums used, except that the "grandfathers" each had a leafy branch (as of willow, cottonwood, or cherry), which they shook, rustling it in time to the singing.

Towards evening the dancers went to one side of the camp-circle, but

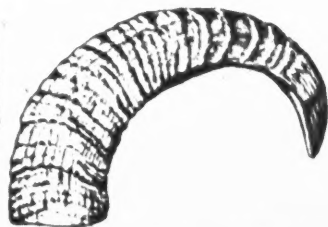


Fig. 32 (50-1830). Fly-dance Horn. Length, 18 cm.

still outside of it. There they danced. Going west of the camp-circle, they danced there, then to the side opposite to that where they had begun, and finally to the east or opening of the camp. When they had danced four times here, all the people had retired to their tents for the night, and all outdoor work had been done. The dancers immediately started out in all directions, looking for people. If they saw any one, they pursued him

until they overtook him. They carried cactus-spines and sharp claws, with which they pricked him. If he succeeded in reaching a tent, they walked around outside, pelting the tent with pebbles. It is said that if the person attacked fanned himself, as he would for flies, the dancers would not sting him. In all their actions in this part of the ceremony, the dancers seem to have imitated flies or mosquitoes. Going about among the tents, they also took meat hanging outside, cooked it, and ate their fill. They also played and ran races until they were tired.

• [587] As to the origin of the dance, it is said that once an old man was asleep, when he dreamed this dance. The fly that gave him the ceremony was a mosquito. It directed him to institute the dance, and showed him how it should be conducted.

[293] Fig. 32 shows a small mountain-goat horn, painted over red, used in this dance as one of the implements for pricking or scratching.



Fig. 33 (50-1936 a). Fly-dance Hoop. Diameter, 8 cm.

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lodge. Other men go up into the hills near the camp, where they are fastened to a post, and fast from sunrise to sunset. In the evening their ceremonial "grandfather" comes and cuts them loose. Young men who want to meet with success in war pierce the skin over their shoulder-blade, and, having inserted sticks, hang two guns to these on each side. Sometimes a crooked-hoofed horse is fastened to the sticks. Thereupon they go about outside of the camp-circle, crying constantly, hoping that some supernatural being will pity them. Still others tie four or five buffalo-skulls in a row, which they fasten in the same way to their backs. They also go around the camp-circle.

If it is thought possible that the enemy may be near at the time of the dance, a man brings a filled pipe to the pledger of the dance and offers it to him, asking about the enemy. The pledger takes out his medicine-bag, which is the skin of the animal he saw in his vision, incenses it, and performs the acts which this guardian animal commanded. Every one is quiet, and the fire is put out so that the lodge is completely dark. The pledger blows his whistle, and the people sing for him as loudly as they can. He makes motions around his head with his medicine, thereby asking his guardian spirit to enable him to see supernaturally. He continues his motions until he is able to see the enemy. Thereupon he sits down. After this, another man offers him a pipe, saying, "We wish you to tell us what you have seen. Therefore take this pipe and smoke it." After he has smoked, the pledger tells the people how many people he has seen, and where they are. He says, "I saw so many buffalo-bulls (men). They are coming from there. Take charcoal for successful battle" (black being the paint of victory).

The dancers also have the power to see the enemy. If, as they look at the "nest" day and night, they see legs hanging down, or a headless body in the tree, it is the sign that an enemy will be killed by the tribe. If, on the other hand, they see blood on the poles overhead or running down the central tree, a member of the tribe will be killed. Sometimes they see a man whom they can recognize as a member of the tribe, black as coal and very thin, hanging from the poles above them. Then he will die soon.

Each day certain men, who seem to be young men, are selected, and their names called out. These men dress as if for war. When they enter, it seems that they sit in a row at the left of the entrance. The bravest of them are then selected, and taken to the back of the lodge, where a bed and head-rest have been prepared, on which they sit. One of these men counts a coup, and picking up a stick puts it into the fire. One after another they do this until a large fire is blazing. These men are called *tsóótaxwuhuu* ("inside dancers"). Thereupon two old men, going to the centre of the lodge and conferring in whispers, select six or eight warriors. As soon as these

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796 men are named, their female relatives return to their tents, and cook. When they have prepared food, they all together bring a large quantity of it to the lodge. The men selected carry weapons, and are dressed for war. They are usually mounted. Where they themselves or their horses were wounded, [302] they paint themselves. If they have ridden over an enemy, a man is painted on the breast of the horse. When the food which has been brought by their female relatives has been eaten, these men, two at a time, go through numerous performances of their achievements in battle. This is done each day of the dance.

796 A group of men and women, called, like those in the preliminary singing-tent, "prairie-chickens," and therefore probably the same persons, seem [534] to be the singers for the dance. They beat a rawhide in place of a drum, and hold branches, which, at the end of each song, they shake, shouting.

[271] The dancers may not drink water, no matter how great the heat. If [821] one of them is unable to endure, and a pitying relative gives him even only a drop, a thunderstorm follows, and the offender may be struck by lightning, or one of his horses may be killed by lightning. In case it seems necessary for the dancers to drink, a pipe is taken to one of the old men. If he accepts it and smokes it, he goes to the central tree. He wears a robe with the hair-side out. He has a whistle in his mouth, feathers in one hand, and a crow-skin in the other. He strikes the bill of the crow four times, with a downward motion, against the lightning symbol on the tree. [789] A vessel is held against the tree at the bottom of the symbol, and, after the fourth blow, water is said to run out until the vessel is filled, when it stops.

[582] This water is given to the dancers, each of whom drinks a very small quantity. The actions of the man producing this water are said to be determined by his personal supernatural vision.

After the four days of the ceremony are completed, the lodge is left standing. All the cloth and clothing that have been attached to it remain [789] in place, and it appears that other clothes, especially of children, are left at the lodge. This is done in order that the children may live a long life.

796 From drawings made by a Gros Ventre, it appears that the buffalo [532] skull is painted with spots, and has its nose and eyes stuffed. Behind it is represented a dancer holding the wheel. He is presumably the pledger of the ceremony. The wheel is bisected by two strings, and has eagle-feathers and down-feathers attached to it. The dancer blows a whistle at the end of which is a plume. The whistle hangs from his neck. At the back of the head is a plume. Lines of paint proceed from his breast to his wrists and ankles. On each of these are four diamonds, two on each upper and lower arm, thigh, and calf. If this is a correct representation, the Gros Ventre use at least one style of painting that is like the most typical Arap-

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was like the flat rocks on which women pound berries, perfectly round, rough above, and perfectly smooth on the under side. Many men lifting together could not move it; but when offerings were made to it, and it was asked to rise, one man was able to lift it easily. Several people tried to sleep near it in order to dream about it, but none of them ever staid the whole night through. They would dream that it was a large metal kettle coming toward them on legs, and filled with boiling water, whereupon they jumped up and fled.

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West of the present Gros Ventre Reservation there was, until the whites took it away, a stone shaped like a person, except that it lacked the face. This was once a Snake Indian. A war-party saw him sitting on a hill, and pursued him into a flat. They had nearly caught him when he turned to stone and has been there ever since. Once, as a camp went by and the people made offerings of calico and other property, a man said, "Why do you do that?" Taking a club, he knocked off the head of the figure. The man died the same summer.

A complete buffalo of stone, with hump, horns, ribs, and other parts, half of it underground, has been seen by the Gros Ventre, and many offerings and prayers have been made to it.

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To the north of the Gros Ventre Reservation is a lake shaped like a buffalo, with legs and all parts complete. The tail runs out into a river, the hoofs are patches of brush, and the horns are streaks of timber of the shape of horns.

Lizards are thought to bite persons and then to hang fast to the wound, sucking the flesh into themselves. It is said that a certain man was bitten and the lizard could not be pulled off. The man's flesh had to be cut off around the lizard's mouth.

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There is believed to be a kind of bear with one white fore-leg, which is fiercer than the grizzly. The jack-rabbit is called "white rabbit;" and the cottontail, "left-hand rabbit." The prairie-dog is called "large gopher" (?); and the mink, "prairie-dog weasel." The bat's bite is thought to be exceedingly poisonous.

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556 a great big lodge and all the other things that were required. But
231 some men might have only one horse and therefore only one wife. Such men wouldn't amount to much; they would be by-passed all the time and couldn't get anywhere. Therefore men did really desperate things in order to obtain horses."¹⁰

556 Horses were thus the most valuable item in Gros Ventre
231 economy. Other informants illustrated this attitude. Garter
735 Snake, for instance, stated: "As a little girl I didn't know poverty. My parents were rich. They had everything they wanted for their lodge, and clothing, and all kinds of horses so I was never in want at any time. Nevertheless, my father, when he was a little fellow, was very poor and had no horse to ride. Possibly somebody would put his mother, who was a widow, on a horse, but he would have to walk. He had hardly any clothes, he was so poor. One time when he was about 12, the camp was moving and they were going to go quite a distance. He was way behind because he would wait until everybody had gone, and then would follow as best he could. This day he went up on a hill to see where the people were camping next, and then he just lay there crying because he pitied himself for being so poor. It was at this time that he was granted his first experience [with the supernatural]. Later on, having made an offering of a black shirt and some feathers, which he had begged from someone at the camp, and having cut off the first joint of the little finger of his left hand, he was told in a vision: 'Son, I invited you here and I am glad you came. 556
231 Look over that way (the direction in which the camps lay). You
735 are poor now, but see those camps? You are going to be noted
787 there. Everyone there is going to respect you and depend on you. And look this way (the opposite direction). See that big band of horses? Those are your horses. Of course you won't get them right away, but that is what you are going to have.' He was granted many powers later on, among them how to operate with a woodpecker feather; how to check hemorrhage; how to cure stoppage of the male urinary tract; how to cure consumption; how to revive a horse which was 'played out'; how to make raiders invisible so they could successfully steal horses. And he finally attained those horses he had been shown."

¹⁰ Cf. Denig, p. 505, "An Indian with one wife cannot amass property."

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the mind was clouded for a while and a man could not remember so well afterwards all that happened in the battle."¹⁴ 726

The leader was constantly on the alert and tended to interpret anything out of the ordinary as having a bearing on the success or ill fate of his party. As a case in point we have the following account of an expedition in the 1860's. "Lame Bull was on a war party of which Big Beaver was the leader. They went to the Crow country hoping to find some hunters in the mountains. At the timber on the river not far from Crow Mountain, the party stopped near a big tree. It was during a thaw in the spring and after they had eaten, they took off their moccasins and hung them on the tree. Then they sat around and smoked and told stories. All of a sudden they heard an owl in the tree above them calling out: 'Where you are sitting under this tree, you are going to be killed.' The owl called again and said the same thing. Big Beaver said to his party: 'I've lived a long time. But never have I heard anything like this owl talking. Let's put on our moccasins and go fast. I think the owl is telling the truth. I think he knows what is going on and people must be near.' All quickly put on their moccasins, and, as they were putting out the fire and preparing to leave, they heard people yelling. Big Beaver gave instructions: 'Scatter. Don't go in file and don't step in the snow, but keep to the bare places so our tracks won't be seen.' So they ran away and soon reached the mountain. When they got to the top of the mountain, daylight had come. They looked down and saw people at the big tree where they had been, searching around for tracks. The Gros Ventres called at the other Indians to invite attack, but the others only stood and looked up, without trying to catch them." 726 787

If the war party happened to be near certain petroglyphs, believed by the Gros Ventres to reveal the future, they went there to read the omens. If they could not then interpret the markings, an offering was left there and the next morning they went again. The markings on the rock were believed to change, and the predictions interpreted therefrom to be accurate. If the omens thus appeared too unfavorable, the whole party might even turn back. 726 787 531

¹⁴ Cf. Kroeber, 1908, pp. 201, 208, for remarks relating to war experiences of individuals.

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726 Greatest reliance, however, seemed to be placed on the information that could be obtained through a "ghost-helper."¹⁸ If a member of the party was known to have the power to command the spirit of a deceased member of his family, he was requested to exercise it. It was said that more often than not the predictions were extremely accurate, as in the following two cases, recounted by The Boy. The first one is estimated to have occurred sometime between 1835 and 1840 and The Boy's grandfather was one of the participants.

787 "The Gros Ventres were camped near the forks of the Teton and Marias Rivers. Practically all the men had agreed to go on the war path. So they left camp and on the first day arrived at the place where Crow Coulee or Creek empties into the Missouri. When it was dark someone said: 'Let's offer the pipe to that man and ask him to find what our prospects on this venture may be, good or bad.' They filled a pipe and presented it to the man, whose deceased father was proven to be his ghost-helper. He accepted willingly. Soon after they smoked, they made a shelter where he was to call his helper. Then they tied up the man and filled the pipe again and put it in the shelter along with him. He sang a song in which the others joined and on the fourth repetition they heard a voice up in the air. The ghost-helper arrived and the shelter shook. When he hit the ground, the ground shook. The ghost-helper was seemingly excited and kept repeating: 'What do you want, my children?' And he said also: 'If you were in my place and old as I am, and as feeble, you wouldn't like to be disturbed. But here I am. What do you want?' They said: 'We want to know how this trip is going to be—what luck we will have—what are our prospects?'

769 "They lit a pipe and offered it to the ancestral spirit. They could see from the flaring of the pipe that he was smoking it. Then the spirit said: 'Well, I don't know offhand. I'll have to look around. While I'm gone you smoke, and after a little while sing again. And I'll come back.' So they followed his instructions. When he came back they could hear the spirit catching its breath as an old man does and it said: 'My children, there are

¹⁸ For discussion of ghost-helper concept among the Gros Ventres see Flannery, 1944, also Cooper Ms. 1949.

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Crow Indians without number invading the camp you just left. 726
They are so bold, knowing you men are away, that they are peep- 787
ing in the lodges watching your women as they are playing the 769
hand game. Your women are in happy mood.' Then the spirit
said: 'These Crow Indians seem to be preparing to take all the
Gros Ventre horses. I'll go back again and watch the Crows to
see what they will do.' So they did as before, and when the
spirit returned he said: 'The Crows have taken practically all of
your horses and will arrive where you now are about sun-up.
Don't be afraid of them, provided you do one thing: be sure to kill
the Crow with the blue blanket coat. He is the only brave man in
the crowd. Kill him first and you'll kill all the others. None of
the Gros Ventres will be killed, but two will be wounded. In case
you do not kill the Crow with the blue coat, the outcome of the
battle will be doubtful.'

"It was nearing dawn by the time the spirit had made his final
report, so the men decided to sit up and not sleep the rest of the
night. At daylight, the leader sent two good men to the knoll about
a half-mile away to look around. The scouts took a look, crawled
back out of sight, got to their feet and ran toward the waiting men
as fast as they could. The group had gathered buffalo chips in
preparation of the usual ceremony of receiving scouts but the
scouts yelled: 'Kick the pile of chips apart. There is no time for
formality. Get ready to fight as quickly as you can—the Crows
are right over that hill!' The Gros Ventres prepared hurriedly
for battle and started for the knoll.

"One old man only was mounted, all the rest were a-foot. This
old man was the one who threw the Crows into a panic because
he had ridden to a high hill to watch the fight, and the Crows
believed that they were going to be surrounded by mounted Gros
Ventres. The Crows decided to dismount, make a stand, and let
go the horses they had captured from the Gros Ventres. They
selected high ground, one side sloping away with soft dirt, the
other side grassy. The Gros Ventres were on the flat ground and
so the fight started.

"While the main group of Gros Ventres engaged the enemy, a
few followed a coulee until they got inside the Crow group and
were able to kill a good many. The Crows decided to run, when

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726 the man with a blue coat tried to hold them: 'If you run you'll
787 suffer a big loss. If you make a stand, the loss won't be so bad.'
769 But they ran right toward the thick mass of Gros Ventres, who
received them by opening up a lane for them. The Gros Ventres
were afraid then to shoot on account of hitting their own men in
cross fire. The man in the blue coat saw the situation and started
to run shouting: 'I have no doubt I shall save myself, for I am a
good runner. Do your best to try to get away now.' So he ran
into the midst of the Gros Ventres, and right through them, pass-
ing his fellow-tribesmen until he was leading the fleeing Crows.

"Suddenly one Crow got brave and decided to make a stand
and stem the pursuit by the Gros Ventres. He dropped back and
pointed a gun at Bear Robe, but another Gros Ventre decided
to attack him and the Crow was so terrified that he failed to pull
the trigger until the Gros Ventre hit the gun. The shot tore Bear
Robe's arm from the elbow to wrist and threw him off balance.
When he recovered, the Crow was still there with his gun so
Bear Robe ran up and snatched the gun and spear from the Crow
and threw them away.

"The Gros Ventres were still pursuing the Crow, and another
one made a stand. A Gros Ventre, Crow Moccasin, armed only
with a tomahawk, struck him. The Crow staggered and dropped
his gun, but grabbed Crow Moccasin's arm to which the tomahawk
was fastened with a string. In the struggle the Crow reached for
his knife and jerked Crow Moccasin toward himself and slashed
his wrist, but he had jerked so hard that the string holding the
tomahawk gave way and the Crow lost balance, then ran. An-
other Gros Ventre shot him down. The fight went on until the
older men thought they should stop and let the Crows go. The one
with the blue coat got away along with nineteen others. Forty
Crow were, however, killed, and the only casualties suffered by
the Gros Ventres were two wounded. It would seem that from
what the ghost helper had told them, if they would have killed the
man in the blue coat, they would have killed all of the Crow."

This second illustration refers to events of much later date,
about 1875. "A Gros Ventre war party was camped east of
Lewiston, across the Missouri River. Morning Star Arises was
asked to consult his ghost-helper who reported: 'All right. I am

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ready to tell you. First, here's the scalp of the Sioux you will kill tomorrow. [This was one strand of hair wrapped around a piece of sage brush, symbolic of the scalp.] I've found a big Sioux camp on Beaver Creek (east of the Little Rocky Mountains). The Sioux are having a big Grass Dance and the one you are to kill tomorrow is having the most fun. He has a sword. You'll capture that sword when you kill him. Don't be afraid. There will be no Gros Ventres killed, but two of you don't look good to me.' The Gros Ventres asked that he name the two, but he refused, saying: 'Just don't be afraid. Go ahead to the place where the Sioux are and attack them. Choose what kind of weather you want to make your escape after the fight, and I'll see that the weather will be that way.' They failed to make a choice, but the spirit said: 'Take a look at the sun every once in a while tomorrow. There will be all kinds of sundogs tomorrow, changing every little while. If they appear, you'll know that I have told the truth.'

"The next morning they decided that only those with good horses should cross the Missouri and attack the Sioux. They approached the camp where the Sioux had spent the night. The Sioux had failed to extinguish their former camp fires, and the embers were blown into flame and the fire was extending toward their new camp. The Sioux decided to fight the prairie fire, laying down their arms, not realizing the Gros Ventres were watching them. The Gros Ventres then attacked. The Sioux were in utter confusion and ran, all of them except a man with a sword who made a stand. Two Gros Ventres, Comes A-Flying and Owl Old Man, tried to ride over this Sioux who, however, sidestepped them and struck both their horses with his sword; meanwhile the Gros Ventres struck the Sioux with their whips, thus counting coups. A third Gros Ventre, Crazy Bear, however, killed him, took his scalp and claimed his sword. Since they had gotten this one scalp—which was sufficient for them to celebrate with a victory dance,—they returned. They saw the sundogs changing as the spirit had foretold. In order to evade the pursuit by the Sioux, they called on the man, whose ghost-helper had given the information, to change the weather. The man sang a song, using his robe as a cover to enclose himself, and said he

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726 wanted a downpour of rain. At once a cloud appeared and in no
 787 time it was a big black storm cloud. Then there was a wind and
 769 a very heavy storm and thus the Gros Ventres got safely back to
 camp. The only loss on this occasion was that of two fine horses,
 one played out and the other foundered from drinking when over-
 heated."

RETURN OF THE WAR PARTY

727 After a successful encounter with the enemy, the homecoming
 was a joyful one, provided no Gros Ventre lives had been lost.
 As they approached the camp, appropriate songs were said to
 have been sung by the victorious party. If, for instance, they had
 stolen horses there was one type of song. On the other hand
 [302] when scalps had been taken, they sang other kinds of songs and
 painted themselves with charcoal. Incidentally, the Gros Ven-
 tres had a saying that "women and children do not make good
 charcoal." Women and children should be captured but not
 killed and scalped."

When the victorious party arrived, they circled the outside of
 the encampment before entering. "Then the party broke, each
 member surrounded by his womenfolk who crowded around, kiss-
 ing him and taking the scalps or other trophies which had been
 won. After a reasonable interval, the crier called all to come to
 [302] the center of the circle and dance. Men and women alike black-
 ened their faces with charcoal, and the women, carrying scalps
 attached to poles, or weapons captured from the enemy, danced
 as innumerable victory songs were sung. Only members of the
 war party were allowed to join with the women in dancing.
 Many husbands, who had to stand on the sidelines, were jealous
 of the brave warriors at a time like this."

727 Most of the songs sung during the victory celebration had
 533 words which referred to encounters wherein the Gros Ventres
 had been successful. New words were often made up to com-
 memorate a particular incident. One of these songs had the fol-
 lowing words: "Where are you going? I've been here all the

[567] ¹⁰ Cocking, p. 112, mentions in 1772 that the Gros Ventres adopted
 "slaves" of both sexes into families who had lost their children either by
 war or sickness.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

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time, thou with grey hair."¹⁷ It refers to a particular Crow who had long grey braids. This man had captured some Gros Ventre women who were out picking berries and had returned to the Crow without having killed a man or stolen horses. His fellow-tribesmen taunted him with his "weakness" and in order to vindicate his honor he again sought out the Gros Ventres and was killed by them. The song was composed by the husband of one of the captured Gros Ventre women.

Another song, classed as a victory song, was composed by an old man whose faith in a younger man was justified. The young man had had a supernatural vision and, although he was as yet untried, he successfully led a war party.¹⁸ Still another song was composed on the occasion on which a Piegan, who had survived a partial scalping, was killed by the Gros Ventres.¹⁹

Even though the party might have succeeded in taking scalps, if any of their number had been killed, the return was a sad one. Whenever feasible they brought back the bodies of the slain from the field of battle. In any case, there was no circling of the camp nor singing. Nor was there a victory dance unless close relatives of the deceased warriors gave permission. An example to illustrate the procedure may be taken from the description of a serious encounter between the Gros Ventres and Sioux, known as the Battle of Black Butte which occurred in 1871 or 1872, upstream from the present site of Havre.²⁰ "There were approximately 30 lodges of Gros Ventres who were greatly outnumbered by the Sioux. Nevertheless, about 30 Sioux were killed and only one Gros Ventre lost his life. On the return of the party, the father of this one victim said: 'I give you charcoal. My son is lying on many.' So they were able to celebrate that victory in a big way."²¹

More often, however, when Gros Ventres were killed in battle, an outstanding relative of one of the deceased volunteered to or-

¹⁷ Song recorded as No. 19.

¹⁸ This was recorded as No. 22.

¹⁹ Song recorded as No. 106. Other songs used at the victory dances were recorded as No. 117, No. 118, No. 119, No. 123, No. 124.

²⁰ His own part in this encounter is described by Black Wolf in Kroeber, 1908, pp. 203-04.

²¹ A song recorded as No. 91 was said to have been composed to commemorate this occasion.

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727 ganize a revenge party. The boy gave the following account of the circumstances under which one such party was announced and carried out. "The brother of Lame Bull's mother had been killed in war by the Piegan. This woman took it very hard because it was her youngest brother of whom she was particularly fond. 726 None of her relatives had taken any action and she was out on the hills mourning. While she was out there she fell asleep and an 727 'old man' appeared to her and said: 'If you make an effort, you will forget your grief. I will teach you a song that you will use when they dance at the victory celebration after your people have avenged his death. This song will be used when they bring back the scalps of the enemies who have killed your brother.' So she went home but didn't say anything about her experience for some time. Finally, however, she told her husband. He then decided to organize a war party to get revenge for his brother-in-law's death. He had a big following as he went against the Piegan. On the way, however, they came across some Blood Indians and killed five of them, which was considered as fulfilling his duty to bring backs scalps in retaliation. When the party returned, the woman of course joined in the victory dance and sang that song, which was then used many times after that when the Gros Ventres were successful."

726 If no prominent relative led the revenge party, the parents of a man killed in war could request some noted chief to do so. In 727 that case the one selected prayed for the success of the party himself and made a sweatlodge, inviting many old men who would likewise pray. The large number of offerings requisite for the occasion were supplied, however, by the man who had made the request. Should he not have the wherewithal to formally approach a prominent warrior, there was still the possibility that revenge might be volunteered by someone who pitied parents as they grieved for their son. This would afford an opportunity for some lesser man to legitimately set himself up as leader of a raiding party for the first time.

STATUS THROUGH WAR-DEEDS

554 Any action that involved risk of life at the hands of the enemy was counted as a war-deed. Raiding for horses, especially for

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have had good reason to have taken contraceptive medicine, since she had lost several children immediately after birth, but she was afraid to take it because her husband was "such a suspicious man."

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A case was cited in which a man, who had this medicine, allowed only one of his nine wives to have a child, though he adopted at least one other child. It was believed that it was possible for a man to take contraceptive medicine, in which case it was not necessary for the wife to do so. Coming Daylight gave as an illustration the fact that her grandmother had no children by her first husband. Another example was given concerning a man who was known to have taken contraceptive medicine and none of whose wives had any children, although he adopted the son of one of them by a former marriage. Unfortunately he gave this adoptive son the medicine to drink and made the young man exceedingly unhappy, because he was very fond of children and none of his wives had any.

There were other medicines known which were said to prevent the birth of females and to permit males to be born. "If the wife of a man known to have this type of medicine gave birth to a daughter, the man would know it was not his child."

Contraceptive medicines might be offered to an individual direct by some supernatural being, but they could also be handed down in a family. Either a man or a woman could inherit this kind of medicine, use it personally, and treat others. It was said that many of these contraceptive medicines have been lost since for some time past it has been customary to bury the medicine with the individual owning it. The Boy was offered the knowledge of such medicine by a man, but he refused it.

Coming Daylight was offered this "power to know children" in a dream—that is, the power to avoid having children herself and to be able to administer the medicine to others. "The 'person' who wanted to give me the power told me, in my dream, to face the rising sun and he was just about to show me how to make a smudge from moss that grows on logs, when I told him: 'No: I would rather not have it.' Many a time 'they' tried to show me powers, but I would not be tricked into anything like that." As a matter of fact she loved children and wanted to have them. She ex-

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pressed this desire early in life and volunteered the following story of her experience.

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"My first husband, Dressed in White, went out hunting and brought back a lot of buffalo meat. I had my robe spread out just inside the door and he threw all the meat on it. Being hungry, I sat down there and was just about to eat the raw liver when he said: 'Wait! Don't eat that.' When I asked why not, he countered with the query: 'Do you like children?' To which I replied: 'You know I love children. I go wherever there is a baby—I love to have them on my lap.' So he said: 'Well, it is your fault that this is going to happen.' He took the oval piece of meat from the upper front quarter and roasted it in the coals. He then threw it to me in a careless way, instead of passing it to me as usual, and said: 'Here, you can have that for your son. You eat this plain—don't eat any tallow with it,' although they usually ate tallow with such lean meat. I said in disgust: 'E:ka:kya! I have always liked children,' and flung the meat out of the door. He said: 'Now that you have done this, you are going to have children from now on.' So, as he predicted, not long after that I became pregnant with my firstborn who was a boy. Unfortunately this boy died and I often wondered if it happened because I threw the meat too violently on that occasion when my husband had offered me the opportunity to choose whether or not I wished to bear children." Incidentally she remarked many times that she is happy she chose as she did,—otherwise now she would be all alone and her children have been so good to her.

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The telling of the above incident brought to Coming Daylight's mind another, which confirms her belief in the relation between "medicine" and conception. "Crow Bull, my mother's brother, had four wives. His first wife did not have any children. Then he married an Assiniboine woman and still later took a third wife. Neither of the latter had children either until one time Crow Bull got mad. His third wife wanted to leave him for another man, but her relatives sent her back to Crow Bull. He, however, slept across from her bed and did not have intercourse with her. Shortly after this the Assiniboine woman did something to displease him and so he made up his mind: 'These two wives of mine are going to have children and settle down!' He had an old-fash-

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Names may be bestowed on account of dreams. Coming Daylight named one of her grandchildren that way. "She dreamed that there was a big gathering and that she was looking for this little grandson. In reality of course he was an infant, but in the dream he was three or four years old. There was an old man, a very old man, dressed all in white, who said to her: 'Why, there goes "White Skunk" up that way.' As she looked she saw her grandson running in the distance and he seemed to be now a tall young man. Upon waking, she told her dream to her daughter. The daughter in turn told her husband: 'My mother had a dream and "White Skunk" is what the old man called him.' The husband said: 'Fine. We will call him that. Now he will reach old age.'"

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If the name is from a dream, the person tells the dream at the time of the naming. This is the way Singer was named by Old Man Sitting High. Occasionally a person might volunteer to name a child on account of a dream, although not always because he had dreamed of a name. "Before one of Cora's children was born, Stiff Arm came to her and told her he had had a bad dream about her. He said: 'In order to prevent my bad dream coming true, I will name the child.' Cora was scared because he was a medicine man. So she had to have a big feast and invite lots of people and give Stiff Arm a horse. There was the formal ceremony. Stiff Arm had given Cora and her husband the choice of three names, derived from his medicine powers: 'White Eagle,' 'Rides Down Hill,' and 'Sailing Eagle.' They chose the last, but the boy was sickly and they had a hard time rearing him. Her relatives thought she should change his name, but she never bothered to do so. He is a young man now."

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It was customary that "when a child gets sick through the given name," the name be changed. The Skinners, for instance, hired Stiff Arm to name their boy. He called him "White Eagle" but he was sickly, so his grandmother, Ghost Calf, and Coming Daylight were the ones that changed his name to that of his grandfather, "Big Man." Ghost Calf told the boy's father to give away two dollars at the dance when she announced the new name. It was stated that in any case the namer should be a healthy person.

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Old folks sometimes gave away their own names to children, as in the case of a man nicknamed Iron Bucket, whose grand-

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nothing the person can do about it. One of Singer's friends was called "Matter in the Ear" and another "Ugly or Homely." Another woman harped so much on an event which took place at Turtle River, that "Turtle River" became the name by which she was known, and most people forgot that her actual name was "Spotted Calf."

The piercing of the ears may be done at the same time as the naming, as apparently was done in the case of Coming Daylight, or might be done shortly thereafter. Singer, for instance, was named by Sitting High, but her grandmother on a different occasion pierced her ears. The parents might pay someone to do this, or a relative might volunteer. The sooner the ear-piercing is done the better, because the older the child is the more it may hurt. Singer said: "That ear-piercing goes either through a dream or through war deeds." In the former case, the dream is told and then the ears are pierced. In the latter case the person must relate a war story: "This is what I have done. . . ." The story has to be a true one concerning an incident wherein the enemy did not retaliate so the ears will heal up without any trouble.¹² The actual procedure, regardless of whether there is much formality or not, is as follows. An awl is used to pierce the ear and into the hole is inserted either a small splinter of rose-wood sharpened to a pin-point, or a porcupine quill. Whichever is used, it is greased before inserting and is left in until it falls out when the ear is healed. At this time is then inserted a small ring merely to keep the hole open. Fancy earrings are not worn by small children. Formerly boys' ears were pierced as well as girls'. The number of holes in each ear seems more or less arbitrary, but all are made on the same occasion. Coming Daylight has one in each ear; Singer has two; Coming Daylight's eldest son has three. The custom is now dying out as the present generation of mothers does not believe in it. Coming Daylight wanted to pierce the ears of her great-granddaughter but the child's mother said: "No. You will hurt her."

¹² Kroeber, 1908, p. 182 states that ear-piercing was said to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions.

Childhood

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stantly admonished to stay at home after they were married and not to go visiting and gossiping with other women. Mothers told their daughters to be respectful to their husbands. When still very young, a girl was taught to "always make a lot over a man." She started with her father and was responsible, for instance, for seeing to it that in the morning when he awakened there was water beside him so he could wash his face before going for his morning bath, and that his breakfast would be ready for him when he came back therefrom. These are the kinds of things girls would be expected to do later for their husbands. 183 864 867

All during the time they were learning domestic skills, girls were told that they should keep everything that they own nicely and to have on hand everything they may need. It was not good to run around and borrow. "Keep your house clean and keep everything in good order, then your husband will like to stay at home." Again, "Don't let your husband's moccasins wear out before you make another pair. Always have things prepared ahead of time." Girls were told, too, that good wives took their husband's moccasins off for them when they came home tired, and so on. 183 867

Coming Daylight always admonished her daughters: "Never talk back to your husband. Women have fiery tongues when they get mad, and that is bad." It was nearly always taken for granted by others that the wife was to blame if her husband beat her. Since it was customary for very young girls to marry men very much older than they, such husbands took upon themselves the role of disciplinarian. [582]

While marriage was taken for granted, apparently a girl was free to accept or to reject medicine power. Neither girls nor women went on power quests, but some individuals were vouchsafed some kinds of supernatural power in dreams. While the experience of Coming Daylight may be unique, it is illuminating. "Even before I was married, I had a particular kind of dream which indicated power to extract illness from the body of a patient. This dream occurred four nights in succession. Each morning I would tell my grandmother about it. The old woman got angry each time and told me not to talk about it, to keep it to myself so that I would become a great doctor. But I had already 787 • [562]

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787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they
562 too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for
868 later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting parties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunters.
852 Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were
868 certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs
533 were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

77 Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,¹ far outside the camp circle.

554 Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

¹ This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953

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Childhood

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among men. It was a severe ordeal and the older men had no mercy on these youngsters.

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Occasionally as training in bravery, the heart of a bear was taken raw and cut into small bits. After calling together the older boys and young men and lining them up, each one in turn was given a bit of the heart dipped in fresh blood and asked: "Well, are you going to have a brave heart?" Some were able to swallow it easily, but others could not stomach it. Those who were able to swallow and retain it were said to be the really brave ones.*

[262]

It was indicated by many informants that in the old days a man would almost have to have had supernatural powers in order to be outstandingly successful in war or to achieve fame as a medicine man. In fact it was thought that supernatural powers could be helpful in many aspects of life including gambling and love. Guardians, however, used to warn the boys and young men under their care that "you can't get something for nothing." By this was meant that a person who accepted supernatural power would not live out his full span of life. Thus, according to The Boy, parents emphasized in training their sons that, rather than going on power quests, they should be ambitious to acquire fame and respect by developing their natural abilities. Nevertheless many sought and obtained supernatural powers, visions apparently often being vouchsafed in youth, although the power might not have been used until later in life. It was believed that those who accepted and used such supernatural powers died prematurely.*

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METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Oral instruction, or "lecturing," stands out in the Gros Ventre mind as the most important method of child training. All of our middle-aged and older informants agreed that some relative, often either the mother or the father, lectured their children almost every day, telling them what was right and what was wrong and "how to live." If boys and girls were present together, there were some subjects which could not be touched upon and would be reserved for fathers to speak about to their sons and for mothers

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* It was said that, in the distant past, the heart of an enemy was so devoured by warriors. For historical confirmation, see Henry, v. 2, p. 734.

[266]

* Full discussion of supernatural powers is given in Cooper Ms., 1949.

Old Age and Death

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buried with its owner. For a woman, her clothing, and sometimes 764
even her pots and pans, were put with her body. It was stated
explicitly, however, that food was never placed with the body by
the Gros Ventres, although it was recognized that the Assiniboine
did so.

A widow would burn the things of her husband which were not 768
placed with his body nor taken by his relatives. She would then 783
be smudged with sage and, should she have kissed the corpse, her
mouth was smudged four times and she was made to spit each
time.

These practices were seemingly tied up with two beliefs,—the 764
first being that if objects were not placed with the body, the 775
deceased would return to look for the things valued in life; the
second, that the recently deceased try to lure the living to join
them. The first point was explained by Mary, whose mother had
told her: "Everyone likes his own things and some hate to leave
them when they die. That is why we used to put personal belong-
ings with the corpse. It might be that there is some one thing
that a person wants which has been 'left behind,' so he will come
back to seek it. Sometimes when you are alone you might hear a
rattling of the dishes or a whistling sound, and you would know
that it was some loved one who had died and who was looking for
something."

As proof of the second point, the following experience was 775
offered by Singer. "When I was ill during a smallpox epidemic, 787
I had a dream. I dreamed that my sister, who had died in this
same epidemic, appeared to me and said: 'Our mother wants you.
Come with me.' My father, who was actually nursing me, seemed
to be standing to one side. He told my sister: 'You have had no
pity on us. You didn't fight for life. What are you coming after
her for? You go by yourself.' But pretty soon my sister came
again and said: 'Now this time I want you to come because our
mother wants you.' So I agreed: 'All right. I will go with you.'
My sister took me to a shabby-looking little old lodge and I didn't
feel right about going in there but I thought: 'Well, to please them
I will look in there anyway.' There was someone there in bed and
my sister was toward the back of the lodge and my mother was on
the other side. My mother told me: 'Here, sit by your sister.' She

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- 787 began to dig around behind her bedding and brought out a bowl
 775 such as that in which buffalo chips are pounded into powder. She
 said: 'Here. I want you to eat this.' It didn't look good to me
 and I just kind of felt it with my fingers. Instead of having sat
 by my sister as my mother had directed, I had remained by the
 door, because I felt kind of scared in some way. So I told them:
 'Wait. I guess I will go out a minute. I will be right back.' But
 I got out of there and ran home as fast as I could go—back to my
 own bed, back to myself. If I had eaten what they had given me
 that would have been the last of me! After this dream I got well."

MOURNING

- 765 As soon as word was circulated that someone had died, all rela-
 152 tives of that person, especially the women, were supposed to gather
 as soon as possible to cry and mourn for the deceased. Very close
 kin were expected to show their sorrow at the death of a loved
 one not only by crying and wailing, but also by casting off their
 good clothes and donning old ones,—robes, for instance, consisting
 of pieces of old discarded lodge covers, or ordinary robes that were
 rough and worn,—and by cutting the hair.⁷ This latter was truly
 182 a great sacrifice, for to the Gros Ventres one of the chief criteria
 302 of beauty, in men and women alike, was extreme length of hair.
 The hair of younger children in a family was spared, even at the
 death of parents, but should, say, a father die, the hair of the older
 daughters was shorn, though not cut so short as that of the widow.
 388 An elderly woman was usually called upon to do the cutting and
 the widow, guided by the strength of her emotional reaction, would
 indicate how short she wished her hair to be. It was said that
 some widows would leave their hair relatively long, just free of
 the shoulders, while others "when they felt too badly, had all their
 hair cut off, almost as men now wear their hair."

Close kin were accustomed to further show grief by going off
 to the hills and fasting, crying aloud as they wandered about alone,
 and sleeping out without shelter. A parent would have done so
 at the loss of a son, one spouse at the death of the other, or a
 sister for her deceased brother. Such mourners would stay out

⁷ For this and other practices in mourning, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

Old Age and Death

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until someone went after them and talked to them and persuaded them to eat and drink some water.

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The most extravagant expressions of grief were expected on the part of close relatives of men killed at war. It was under such circumstances that the mourners tore off their clothes and gashed their arms and legs. The blood was not washed off and the wounds were allowed to fester, often leaving ugly scars. It was maintained that in mourning the Gros Ventres did not cut off fingers,—that was done only in fulfilment of a vow.

[307]

If a brave young man were killed by the enemy, his parents went even further in the expression of their grief, and sometimes had to be restrained from committing suicide. The father could show additional sorrow by cutting the manes and tails of his son's horses, which he then led about as he wandered on the hills for four days and nights, crying and mourning. The following case illustrates the behavior of an elder brother in mourning for a younger one, but may be somewhat exceptional in that the former felt responsible for the latter's death.

[762]

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"Little Man, also known as Deafie, was on his way home with his younger brother. They had been on a friendly visit to the Crow. There were others in the party and one evening while they were camped, the younger brother had a dream. The next morning he told them: 'I had a bad dream. I dreamed I got killed.' One of the older men said: 'All right. We will stop here awhile so we can make a sweat-lodge and we will snudge.' (That is what they did when they wanted to prevent something bad from happening.) But Little Man told them that, although the rest of them might believe in dreams, he did not, and he insisted that they move on. The old man couldn't say anything more. As they were going along that same day, Little Man was scouting ahead and sighted the enemy. The Gros Ventre party separated, Little Man going with one group, his brother with the other. The brother happened to go right into the midst of the Assiniboine and was killed. The others heard the shots, but when they got there, Little Man found his brother lying dead. He then tore off all his clothes and would have committed suicide by dashing singlehanded after the enemy had not his brother-in-law grabbed him and held him back. When they got home, Little Man felt so badly that he cut off his beautiful

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787 long hair. All this happened just a year before he married Coming Daylight."

It was said that not infrequently those out mourning on the hills experienced visions of supernatural significance. It seemed that women were especially favored at times like that since they never went out in quest of power as did men. When Lame Bull's wife was mourning for her younger brother after he was killed at war, "someone" came to her and taught her a special song which she should sing when the party returned from avenging his death. Coming Daylight, when crying out on the hills after one of her sons died, was "shown a cane" which she took to mean that she would live to be an old woman. Another of her visions is given in detail as it involves a substitution for the more violent expressions of grief.

"When I was out in the hills after my favorite son died, I dreamed that I was in a big lodge full of people and I was sitting right by the door. At the back of this lodge was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe lying alongside. The owner of the lodge, after he filled the pipe, got up and walked toward me. I was scared, because I didn't smoke. This one told me: 'Look at these people.' I did so and noticed that many of them had their hair cut and that their bodies were bleeding. Then he said: 'That kind of mourning is in the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking this pipe.' He gave me the pipe and I started to smoke. I smoked until the tobacco was finished, emptied the pipe and put it down. Then the owner of the lodge told the other people there: 'Go ahead.' All the people in there took turns coming up to me, each rubbing red paint on his hands and painting me, starting at the top of my head and proceeding right down to the tip of my moccasins. I was facing the door and when the last one finished, the man told me: 'Now go home. Don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always smoke if you want to.'

"That was my dream. When I got home I sat down and started to cry. When my husband asked me what was the matter, I told him that I wanted a smoke, related my dream to him. He said: 'I will take you to your sister.' When we got to her house my husband said to her: 'Your sister is crying for a smoke.' My sister laughed and said: 'Well, I have no Pinto ponies to give her!

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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I have always heard her say that she would never smoke, even if someone gave her a pinto pony.' But when my husband told her about my dream, she said: 'Oh. It is great to have a dream like that. Many of us fast and pray and we are never shown anything!' So she fixed a smoke for me and gave it to me. I have been smoking ever since."

Whenever close relatives happened to be in the vicinity where lay the remains of one of their number, some at least went there to cry. Coming Daylight remarked that she remembers well where each and every one of her relatives had been "left," and feels the country, over which the Gros Ventres had control in the 1860's and 1870's, to be "fenced in" by their remains.

At present when a Gros Ventre dies, no "feasting and smoking" is done for four days thereafter. If, however, an important date has been set and it is seriously inconvenient to postpone a big gathering, at least one of the chief mourners would be invited "too soon," and has no choice but to accept. Before eating, the host or someone in his place "talked" to the mourner and commanded him to cease mourning, to paint his face, and henceforth to join in all amusements, dances, and social affairs of the people.

Supernatural Beings

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Supernatural power too, while gotten immediately from animals, 776
 mountains (mountain spirits), and other creatures, through fasting
 and sleeping out on the hills, came ultimately from the Supreme
 Being, as mentioned previously. A person going out on a power [782
 quest, would pray first to the Supreme Being to command or 787] ●
 compel the lesser being to give the power being sought. Power to
 doctor and to achieve war success and even to acquire wealth thus
 in the last analysis came from the Supreme Being. So too did
 the (supernatural?) power inherent in earnest wishes or thought
 wishes.

The Supreme Being also imparted knowledge and warnings to 776
 human beings through dreams and through his messenger, the 787
 crow. The crow on account of his relationship to the Supreme
 Being was a sort of sacred bird.¹² To illustrate the point the Boy [825]
 told the following incident in the life of his father, Lame Bull.
 "Lame Bull on one occasion was sitting out on a hill and no one
 could get him to come back to camp. So some of his family got
 one of Lame Bull's wives, The Boy's mother, to go out and tell
 Lame Bull to come home right away as the camp was moving.
 As Lame Bull saw her coming, a crow flew over to him and said,
 'This person who is coming is going to tell you something that
 is not true. Don't pay any attention to her.' Then the crow flew
 away. When The Boy's mother came within hearing distance of
 Lame Bull, the latter said to her: 'Don't say what you are going
 to say. Turn back.' But she kept on coming and told him her
 message, for which she got a scolding from him."

In general the Supreme Being was, as regards his interest in 776
 human welfare, the reverse of an otiose deity. His interest was
 a most active one.

Equally active was his interest in man's moral and social be- [888
 havior. He was pleased at such moral or social acts as respect 736]
 and help to the aged and care of the orphans, and was offended
 by grave breaches of the moral or social order. He bestowed

¹² In 1948 The Boy explained: "The crow is not the kind you see around
 here now, but a raven,—a bird that is smaller and more streamlined than
 the crow. The crow here in the fields cry like they are wounded, but this
 other bird has a shrill but melodious call more like a human being." [R.F.]

Supernatural Beings

21

power from the "ghost men" by sleeping near their pictographs, but never with any success. One young man, however, once without quest got power in childbirth cases from a boss of little children who appear to him in a dream, and Singer thought these "little children" were "ghost men," but the identification is doubtful. The only message they ever got from the "ghost men" was a request or demand that the Gros Ventres go away at once as they smelt bad or made the place smell bad. On war parties or other occasions, offerings were made at the pictograph cliff to the "ghost men," who would then during the night make new pictographs on the morrow from which the future in the form of good or bad fortune could be easily foreseen by the members of the party.²⁹ 776

Supernatural power was gotten either by quest or otherwise from ghosts or, as more commonly, from non-human beings, such as mountains (or the spirit who inhabited or owned the mountains), rocks, mammals (bear, wolf, weasel, mink, coyote, rat, prairie dog and others), birds (crow, prairie chicken), snakes, spiders and so forth. "These lesser beings, while ranking a little above human beings and possessing certain superhuman powers, were under the leadership and control of the Supreme Being, from whom they had received such powers to be imparted in turn to human beings. Like Bha'a, they were, so to speak, delegated agents and underlings of the Supreme Being, put by him in charge of "the details of the whole situation," as The Boy expressed it. The powers so imparted were of many kinds, to cure, to poison or otherwise harm, to foretell, to become a great warrior, to acquire wealth, to succeed in love and gambling, et cetera, as will be described in detail later. 776 787 778

NON-CULT BEINGS

So much for the beings to whom cult was rendered in the form of prayer or sacrifice. We shall now describe the supernatural beings,—human, "humanoid" and non-human,—to whom no cult was rendered but who entered in one form or other into ritual 776

²⁹ Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 93.

783 powers, intended more for the positive advantage of the keeper or
755 his people, were customarily acquired during or after the transfer rite.

[278] In the transfer rite the new keeper was taught how to doctor, especially in cases of fits, spasms and cramps. The peppermint beverage, now used by everybody for these maladies, was formerly a monopoly of the Flat Pipe keeper in his curing practice. Other doctoring powers were also conferred on him and he could use the hair rope from the Flat Pipe bundle as a potent medicine to cure with, but we could obtain no details on these points.

● [787] The keeper would pray to have good dreams and might sleep on the Pipe bed for the same purpose. His dreams, when told, were important news for his fellows, as through them the future could be foretold.

789 The keeper was also given power to summon, call or "snare"
793 from a distance, enemies or reluctant friends. The Boy gave two instances of the use of this power, both from the lips of his father, Lame Bull. When Lame Bull, on learning of his election as Flat Pipe keeper fled to the hills, the ex-keeper so summoned him, using the Flat Pipe itself in the rite. The nine Flat Pipe songs were sung and at the end of each, the ex-keeper holding the Pipe at arm's length in both hands with the stem pointed upward and outward, sang the Hair Rope song, then twisted the stem tip in a vertical near-circle first upward and outward and then inward and downward in a sort of beckoning motion as if drawing something toward him, then downward and finally lowered the bowl toward (or to?) the ground.

[726] On a later occasion during Lame Bull's keepership, on a war expedition against the Piegan he learned in a dream where they were located and was told that five of them would be killed. The night before the attack on the Piegan, using a common pipe and the above calling rite, thrice performed, with the pipe stem pointed toward the distant Piegan camp, invisible at the time to the Gros Ventre party, and singing the Hair Rope song, he "called" five of the Piegan, who, separated from the main Piegan body, were killed by the Gros Ventres.

793 The keeper and co-keeper also were given power to use in hunt-
224 ing buffalo, but we were able to obtain no details on the rite. The

The Flat Pipe Ritual

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from which it was made, inao:, a term not used for white traders' paint.

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[788]

The Gros Ventres used to get it out in the hills on Stiffarm Creek at Curly Head's place. It occurs as a yellow clay or dirt, as a yellow strip or streak in whitish banks or hillsides, or sometimes it was dug up from the ground. Not everyone could gather it; never men even in the old days, although in recent times Little Man used to do so; but only old women, and only certain ones at that. Coming Daylight's grandmother used to gather it and so did Coming Daylight herself who learned the method and ritual of gathering and preparing it from her grandmother. Singer's grandmother used to gather and prepare it, but she herself did not want to do it, although she had the chance to learn from her grandmother. The art and rite were "kind of handed down."

When about to gather the yellow clay, the woman would sit by the deposit, smoke, and while smoking pray that the clay she was about to gather would be abundant and good. An offering, usually of tobacco, was left at the spot. Both in gathering and in baking the clay the woman had to be alone.

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The baking of the clay was done at night by the woman who had gathered it. The children could not be around making a noise, and she herself had to be very quiet. She would make a sort of batter of the clay by mixing it with water, and would knead it into flat round cakes with a round hole in the center. A fire, formerly of buffalo chips, more recently of cow manure, was made, and when it died down to coals, the cakes were put at the bottom, covered up with live coals, and a fire built on top. The woman baking did not blow the fire and she shut everything up. If you blew on the fire the whole paint would disappear. The baking had to be done very skillfully to turn out just right. The baking was fraught with some danger, and some fear went with it. If the cakes baked too brown, this was a bad omen. When the cakes were baked sufficiently all the coals were removed and the cakes, blackened on the surface, were taken out and allowed to cool. The black surface was scraped away, leaving the clay now burnt red. This red clay was then pounded to fine powder on a piece of rawhide.

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[787]

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*796 in the ground to the east, south and west." The vower then got up, and facing east and holding up one piece at arm length, prayed, aloud or silently, lowered the bit of food in three stages, and put it in the earth, saying: "Last Child, there's your food." Then he did likewise to the south, and west.

Throughout this vowed rite, as throughout other Flat Pipe rites, the Pipe itself was not prayed to, but served only as a medium or symbol through which prayer was made directly or ultimately to the Supreme Being, "very much," as The Boy explained, "like pictures or Crucifixes used in the Catholic religion."

After the eating got under way, the vower would bring to the keeper the clothing, weapons, skins and other valuables presented in payment. Usually the keeper and co-keeper would distribute these, or most of them, to the ex-keepers, ex-co-keepers and other "holy" people who were present and who had helped him on this or previous occasions.

•1787 If a man had had a dream in which a request was made of him to make a sweat-lodge for the Flat Pipe or if he had other grave reason, he might vow: "I will make a sweat-lodge for the Flat Pipe." If the vow were made in the winter time, the keeper would reserve the right to determine when it would be fulfilled, and might defer the fulfillment until some day in spring, perhaps at the time the spring seasonal rite was to be held. The vower besides building the sweat-lodge with the help of some relative or friend was obligated also to bring offerings, as valuable ones as he and his relatives and friends could afford. Not everyone would be well enough off to give offerings suitable in quantity and quality for this solemn occasion, and in such case the keeper might take some of the offerings that had previously been made by others to "cover" the Pipe (see *infra*) and tie them to the offerings-stick and sweat-lodge offerings pole to make up for the deficiency.

The whole sweat-lodge ritual was carried out, including the tying rite the night before, the offering and tying at the sweat-lodge pole, the praying, smudging and singing, the bringing of the Flat Pipe bundle to the sweat-lodge, and so forth, just as in the seasonal and vowed Flat Pipe smoking rites, with only minor variations. The vower assisted the keeper the night before in preparing the offerings, took the offerings-stick outside, and the next

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784 blew medicine on the woman who then recovered. If you even passed in front of the keeper, you would "drop in a cramp."

[576] Food offered in the keeper's lodge, even on a purely social and informal occasion, had to be eaten there and could not be taken out unless some one told a personal war-deed. This taboo applied even to an ex-keeper guest, although not to the actual keeper's children. The keeper could break up the gathering by emptying his own pipe—a recognized Gros Ventre convention for hosts.

[821] If anybody threw water at the keeper or hit him with water, this would cause rain.

Where a group of men were seated in a row or crescent having a purely social smoke, the general procedure was as previously described. If the Pipe keeper were one of the group, the man passing the pipe to him on either the clockwise or return circuit would first make a gesture with it "to the rear between himself and the keeper," if you didn't do that the keeper would not accept it.

The powers of the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper specifically recorded by us were similar, apart from control of storm, rain and flood and, as far as they went, to those of the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper. The weather control powers will be described later under Feathered Pipe ritual.

[753] Anyone who stepped in the track of the keeper or co-keeper got a fit, for the soles of their moccasins were kept treated with wild parsley.

The keeper and co-keeper acquired by reason of their office certain doctoring powers.

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793 The keeper had marked dreaming and forecasting powers, just as the Flat Pipe keeper had, and his dreams when told to the people were "big news." In a dream he would, for instance, see animals fighting the Gros Ventres and this would be a warning to a war-raiding party to act discreetly. He would foretell from his dreams who would win in a prospective battle and how many would be killed. At the time the Flat Pipe was captured by the Assiniboine (see No. 8 in Appendix), the Feathered Pipe owner was fore-warned by the Pipe in a dream and he and his party escaped. If the keeper had a dream that foreboded evil fortune he would on waking talk to the Pipe and ask it not to let the evil

The Feathered Pipe and Other Pipes

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happen. If told in a dream, perhaps by the owl, of an impending epidemic, he might call all the people to his lodge and ritually paint them. If he dreamed of bad luck about to befall some individual in camp, he would tell him: "I dreamed that something was going to happen to you. You better make an offering. I will pray for you and try to avert the misfortune, but you must help."

In general the keeper and co-keeper of the Feathered Pipe were expected to live strictly in conformity with Gros Ventre ethical norms. Specifically recorded by us as unbecoming and forbidden to the keeper were: stealing, fighting, quarreling, losing temper, wife-beating, talking evil of fellow-tribesman, "talking dirty," threatening to kill, and, for more recent times, cursing and swearing like the whites.

The Feathered Pipe keepership seems to have involved for the keeper and co-keeper about the same privations and restrictions as did the Flat Pipe, although we obtained explicit information only regarding the following ones.

"The keeper of the Feathered Pipe was not supposed to comb his hair. It was all matted and made him look different from other men. You see him and you know at once he is a Pipe man. Sitting High's hair was that way. The locks were stuck together in the back. It made him look like a holy man. He never cut his hair and was not supposed to put water on it. His wife [the co-keeper] could comb her hair, but I do not think she could put water on it."

The keeper could not bathe or swim in a stream; if he did, there would be rain. He could not wash his face but wiped it off with a cloth. He could not cut himself as a sacrifice or as a sign of mourning. He could not cry at mourning, not in the presence of the Pipe. Gambling by or with the keeper was forbidden, under the same penalty of life and with the same rite of absolution as described for the Flat Pipe keeper.

According to Al Chandler, the Feathered Pipe keeper and co-keeper, in contrast to the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper and

* In 1948 Al Chandler added: "The keeper cannot eat eggs, chicken, the head of any animal, nor dogs. In fact nothing about dogs was allowed near the keeper. Wherever they were, no one could walk in front of the keeper or co-keeper." [R.F.]

The Feathered Pipe and Other Pipes

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"glistening" [no doubt, highly polished], very dark grey or greyish brown stone, with three or four humps on the upper surface of the stone stem part. Our informants, who had seen the Pipe, disagreed as to whether there are feathers on the Pipe itself, and one of them stated that it had looked different to him on the two occasions he had seen it.

In the Pipe bundle were many other sacred objects besides the Pipe itself. Most of these had their separate wrappings or cases, the Pipe itself being wrapped in buffalo hair. The first keeper, according to Garter Snake, wrapped the Pipe itself in a bit of white buffalo skin. The outermost wrapping of the Pipe bundle was, originally at least, of tanned elkskin, tied around with four strings. There was also, again originally at least, a bear robe cover for the bundle.*

The Pipe bundle would shake and quiver when there was going to be an earthquake. The keeper could then predict that the earthquake would occur soon, although he could not predict the exact time. Not so long ago Cora Chandler's old aunt saw the bundle quiver, and sure enough that summer an earthquake occurred.

Informants consistently agreed that there were four main things in the bundle, and that two of the four were the Pipe itself and the carved stone face.* Most of them included the feathered stick among the four. As to whether the fourth was the whistle, the owl, or the crane, there was considerable conflict of opinion, a conflict we were unable to clear up.

The feathered stick, from which the Pipe itself derived its name.

* Dr. Hagener noted at the 1951 opening that the innermost wrapping of the whole bundle was of "old bison leather" and the outer wrapping of modern cloth." [R.F.]

* Dr. Hagener stated in letter of Jan. 18, 1954, "The pipe displayed in the pictures [Plate J, C and D] was not the chief pipe of the bundle (that having mysteriously disappeared). It was however made of the red stone commonly traded from the Minnesota area. Although there were other pipes in the bundle this was the only one we were permitted to see. Iron Man checked on the presence of other pipes by feeling inside the leather casings, but did not bring them out." Under date of Aug. 8, 1954, Dr. Hagener remarked: "Dr. Nitz was of the opinion that there were two somewhat similar pipes in the bundle, one of which had disappeared. The picture . . . is of the remaining one." [R.F.]

The Feathered Pipe and Other Pipes

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covering it. When they talked to the image, they prayed for whatever they wanted, but did not mention Bha'a. Whom the image represented is not known: probably Bha'a, but this is uncertain. 778

In recent times, the last real keeper, Curly Head, had danced with the image, contrary to all the ritual rules. Curly Head is consistently reported by informants to have been very careless as well as poorly informed about the ritual and other observances connected with the Feathered Pipe keepership.

The face when exposed was apt to look different to different people on any one occasion as well as to the same person on different occasions. To one man the face seemed not to want to look at him; it "kind of turned away and sweated." To another observer, a woman, it appeared as "a rock that had two shining eyes." Al Chandler had seen the face three times. On each occasion it had a different expression: on the first it looked as if it were "smiling, sort of bashful;" on the second, "kind of sad;" on the third, "sad." On the one occasion on which his wife, Cora Chandler, had seen the face, it "seemed like it was looking away, and wouldn't look at her." 778 532

According to Al Chandler, if the face smiled, this was an omen that "everything was going to be good;" if it "looked in the opposite direction, something not good" would happen. According to Garter Snake, if when the keeper saw the face, it had paint on it, there would be plenty of food, no sickness, and so forth; if it had no paint on it, there would be sickness or other misfortune. 778 787 ●

The whistle, of wood ("of an unknown kind of wood," according to Garter Snake), was given the first keeper from above. It was kept without wrapping in the Pipe bundle. 778 [534]

The owl in the bundle was the skin of a big owl, painted up, with few of the feathers still attached. The body was wrapped leaving the head and neck sticking out. This owl skin was apparently of modern introduction. According to Al Chandler, when a new keeper took over the Pipe, he could add to the bundle whatever he was told "by a voice" to add; Sitting High said he was told by God Himself to put that owl in the bundle. Sitting High used to talk a great deal to the owl. The owl's duty, accord-

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785 couldn't stand it. I ran home to my grandmother and cried too
 *796 because I pitied that young man." On another occasion, Thick
 [152] too, then a young boy, "cried from the pitiful scene," as he expressed it. "Big Thunder," according to Coming Daylight, "had very long thick hair. When he was dancing around the pole in the Sacrifice Dance his hair swept the ground. It looked just awful. I screamed and ran home." From what was told The Boy by his brother who underwent this self-torture once in the Sacrifice Dance and twice alone on a knoll (see details of latter rite, pp. 393-398), "The beginning was hardest; as you went along, you got sort of numbed and the pain was not so bad." His brother had felt very acute pain at the trimming of the lacerated flesh. That night the pain was so intense that he could not sleep: "it was as if two red hot coals were there."

According to Al Chandler the Gros Ventres considered their Sacrifice Dance a much more severe ordeal in the way of self-torture and fasting than were the Sun Dances of neighboring tribes and to this severity they attributed the early abandonment of the rite.

After all the "dancers" had in turn gone through their self-torture, they left the scene together, and were through with their participation in the Sacrifice Dance and could break their fast. But, through the succeeding fourth night, some of the other participants (which ones we could not discover) continued their fast, and the others danced and sang.

*796 Certain important features of the Sacrifice Dance have not been mentioned so far, as we could not learn just where they fitted into the ritual sequence. We shall describe them now.

The Boy was quite positive that a sweat-lodge rite was held in connection with the Sacrifice Dance, on the fourth night of singing and just prior to the beginning of the Dance proper. In all likelihood the rite followed in general pattern that of the Sacred Pipe sweat-lodge. Sweet grass was the proper ritual material smudge throughout the Sacrifice Dance including this preliminary sweating.

787 Some of the participants in the Sacrifice Dance,—“not necessarily
 *796 the one or ones who had made vows, but dancers trying their

The Sacred Dances

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utmost to be fervent and sincere,"—would, at some time or times (not specified by our informants) during the rite, keep staring fixedly for a long time at the "nest" in the fork of the center pole. The purpose was mostly "to see things that related to war." "If the gazer saw the forms of headless human beings, that meant that the Gros Ventres were going to be given an enemy to kill." Sometimes was seen a human form, healthy, all painted up and dressed in good clothes: This meant that the favors being sought through the Sacrifice Dance would be granted. In the Assiniboine and Cree Sun Dances, our Gros Ventre informants said, the staring is done in contrast to the Gros Ventre custom, at the knots in the center pole, but for what purpose our informants did not know. 787
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This divination gazing to foreknow martial fortunes, taken together with the markedly martial symbolism underlying the scouting for and felling of the center pole, lend a definitely, although by no means exclusively or even predominantly, war coloring to the Sacrifice Dance,—a coloring almost entirely absent from the Sacred Pipe rites, which are concerned dominantly though not exclusively, with long life, food and health. [171]

The gazing, at "Bha'a's nest," brought Bha'a, the Thunder Bird and ruler of the storm, prominently into the Sacrifice Dance, as did also the thunder bird and lightning symbols painted on the bodies of the dancers and carved on the center pole as well as certain reliances on and prayers to him during the Dance. "If the dancers had danced a long time," according to Al Chandler, "and were getting weak, Bha'a, it was claimed, could make it cool and shady or even make it rain." Bha'a, too, was mentioned, after the Supreme Being, in some at least of the prayers with the common pipe. In all cases however, where Bha'a entered into prayers, he was either given subordinate second-place mention or was appealed to as a subordinate agent, with limited autonomy, of the Supreme Being. The vows, the sacrifices of goods and flesh, the tortures, and predominantly the prayers and rites were to the Supreme Being. As one informant put it, "all the things done in the Sacrifice Dance,—the tortures and so forth,—were one great mass prayer to the Supreme Being." 796*

We recorded five of the Sacrifice Dance songs, but there were

CHAPTER VI

SUPERNATURAL POWERS

Most of the Gros Ventre rites and observances thus far dealt with in the present volume were intended to fulfill the wishes and needs of the whole tribe or of larger segments thereof and were actively participated in by all or many members of the tribe. In this sense these rites and observances constituted collectivistic public cult, and leaned toward cooperative altruism. The chief wishes they sought to satisfy were for continued long life for all, with abundance of food and other material necessities, and with freedom from epidemics, storms and tribal enemies, and for continued concord and solidarity among the tribal members. Ritual reliance was upon the petition, mostly to the major deities, the Supreme Being and Bha'a, through prayer expressed in word and in act. 771

Most of the rites and observances to be dealt with from here on were intended to fulfill the wishes and needs of specific individuals and were participated in by very small groups. In this sense these rites and observances constituted individualistic private cult, and leaned toward egoism, often a competitive egoism. The chief wishes they sought to satisfy were for knowledge of distant or future events, prestige through war prowess and wealth, cure of individual illness, and success in gambling or in sex affairs. Ritual reliance was upon the immediate help given in each case of appeal by an ancestral spirit or upon supernatural power imparted once for all by some non-ancestral superhuman being.

In the present section we shall take up first the personal ancestral helpers, and after that the personal supernatural powers. 787 •

Separate treatment of personal ancestral helpers and of personal powers seems advisable in view of certain rather fundamental differences between the two cultural patterns involved. The spiritual helper was appealed to for knowledge of distant or future events; other lesser beings for supernatural power in matters of 769 ✓

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war, wealth, curing, gambling, and sex. The helper imparted no power of clairvoyance or prophecy; the other lesser beings did impart one or other of the specific powers above listed. The helper had to be summoned to come in person on each occasion when needed; the other beings gave power once for all to the receiver and were not, at least not ordinarily, summoned to come in person when the imparted power was exercised. The helper was always a deceased relative of the helped; the power-giver was a non-ancestral being. The helper was not acquired by quest, he more or less forced his services on the recipient, and was not transferable; personal power was commonly (although not always) acquired by quest, was accepted or refused freely, and was more commonly transferable.

Our chief sources of information upon personal ancestral helpers and personal supernatural powers were: among the men, The Boy, Thick, Al Chandler, Thomas Main, Turn Toes; among the women, Coming Daylight, Singer, Garter Snake, Mary Ereaux, Cora Chandler. Their competence will, we believe, become clear from the circumstances to be noted passim in the present section.

ANCESTRAL HELPERS

The ancestral helper complex among the Gros Ventres has been recorded in detail by us in two papers published in 1944,¹ to which the reader is referred. The following account is a summarized version of these two papers.

The ancestral or ghost helper was called tsätsuwa'a,² of uncertain etymology. The word was used exclusively for such ancestral helpers, as distinct from other ghosts (see p. 23).

Such a ghost helper was acquired, not by quest through fasting or crying, as power was more commonly acquired. Acquisition usually came about as follows. A man or woman would keep some memento of a deceased close relative, such as some prized possession or else a rib or tooth³ or lock of hair of the deceased,—either in

¹ Flannery, 1944, pp. 54-59; Cooper, 1944, pp. 80-84.

² This same word is used by the Gros Ventres at present for "radio."

³ After the body had decomposed. Formerly the Gros Ventres did not bury the dead in the ground, cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 211.

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order to acquire the ghost of the deceased as a helper, or else solely out of regard for the departed. In most cases nothing happened; in a few, however, the ghost of the deceased became the survivor's supernatural helper. In these exceptional cases, the survivor would be apt to hear knocking, whistling or other disturbances around the spot where the memento was kept. Then the ghost would appear to the survivor, perhaps first putting him in a deep sleep, and would offer to become his helper, or ask him if he would wish this. An offer made by the ghost could not easily be refused.

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The survivor had some leeway—Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, accepted such an offer only on condition that he would call upon the ghost for his personal use and not for public use—but more commonly the ghost not only took the initiative in offering its services but more or less forced its services upon the survivor.

While the survivor was still in deep sleep or trance, he or she—women as well as men could have a ghost helper—would be taught by the ancestral spirit the proper rites, including always and particularly a song, to be used by the survivor in summoning and making use of the spirit. One such ghost-summoning song (number 27), a wordless one, recorded as sung by The Boy, had been given to Woman, nicknamed Bear Old Woman, who died around 1907, by her deceased husband (or brother?), Bad Bad Bull. It had been his doctoring song when he was alive and his ghost gave it to her to use both in summoning him and in curing people.⁴ It should be emphasized, however, that a person could have an ancestral helper without having doctoring power, and vice versa. A person who lacked a ghost helper could not conduct the ghost-summoning tent-shaking rite, no matter how great power of other kinds he had acquired by quest or otherwise.

Songs other than those given for use in summoning the ancestral helper and conducting the shaking tent rite were sometimes given and taught by the helper to the person who had the helper, on occasions other than that on which the summoning song itself

⁴ Cf. Cooper, 1944, 62, 72-75.

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787 was given. Two such songs, victory songs, given during war raids, were recorded by us.

[184] A great many Gros Ventre men and women had power acquired by quest or otherwise from non-ancestral beings, but far fewer had ancestral helpers such as we are describing. Our informants, in fact, whose combined memories carried back to the early 1860's, could recall only five or at most six, seven or eight: Good Singer, Woman (or Bear Old Woman), Morning Star Appears (probably the same as Rising Cross), Bird Child, Bull Head, and perhaps two or three others.* Persons with ghost helpers had prestige, not greater however than outstanding doctors had.

[425] Power acquired from non-ancestral beings could be transferred by the possessor to another person through gift or sale. But a ghost helper was not transferable; such power was owned property; a ghost helper was not. A given person never had more than one ghost helper, so far as we could discover. In the shaking tent rite, only this one ghost helper had part,—no other being, neither the Supreme Being, nor Bha'a, nor Little Spirit,* nor any power-giving being.

At the time the ghost helper was accepted by its surviving relative, it promised him (or her) to come when summoned with the summoning song, but, in sharp contrast to the practice of non-ancestral power-bestowing beings, it imparted no power to him whatever, whether in war, medicine, gambling or love, except the "power," if it can be called such, to summon the ghost and except by sheer coincidence as in the case of Bad Bad Bull mentioned above. The ghost helper imparted not power, but knowledge; not any power of clairvoyance, prophecy or wisdom, but knowledge itself; not once and for all at the time of being accepted by the person, as did the power-bestowing beings but from time to time if and when summoned. The sole function of the ghost helper as

* Cf. Flannery, 1944, pp. 55-58; Cooper, 1944, pp. 62-77 passim. Rising Cross of Flannery, p. 56, was pretty surely the same person as Morning-Star-Appears or Morning-Star-Is-Up, of Cooper, p. 71; probably the same person as mentioned in Watches-All's narrative by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 216-17.

[114] * That Little Spirit could function in the shaking tent rite in place of an ancestral spirit, as stated reservedly by Cooper, 1940, p. 112, is an error, corrected by field data gotten by him later.

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such was, in answer to questions asked it on each separate occasion when summoned, to reveal knowledge about past, present, future or distant happenings or to impart counsel and directions on what to do in given cases of illness or danger. The ghost helper rarely if ever came unsummoned and only exceptionally volunteered information. As a rule it gave information in response to specific questions asked. The helper was never questioned about trivial or silly matters, or about such things as the fidelity or infidelity of a wife. Questions would be asked, for example, regarding missing persons, the whereabouts and plans of the enemy, the fortunes of a distant war party,⁷ the outcome of an impending battle or of an illness, the location of a stolen article and the identity of the thief, the best place to go for good buffalo-hunting.

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The ghost helper did not hover around the person habitually. When need for its services arose it had to be summoned from afar, from the distant abode of the dead.

When the services of a person with a ghost helper were desired, he (or she) was approached with an offer of a pipe to smoke. He was often reluctant or afraid to accept, but could not easily refuse.

The summoning rite was held at night, with the fire out, in darkness,—ordinarily in the performer's lodge, but, if the party were away from camp, in a small emergency shelter or sweat-lodge. If the rite were held in the performer's lodge in camp, a blanket-curtain was hung up across part of the back of the lodge, and the performer stayed hidden behind this out of sight of the clients or spectators.

Commonly, although not always, the performer was first wrapped in a blanket and then securely bound with thongs, the binding often being done by some skeptic present who was challenged by the performer to do it.

After being tied, the ghost-possessor sang his summoning song, those present joining in. As the ghost helper approached, whistling, humming, and other noises, sometimes an owl call, would be heard. As the ghost entered the lodge, always through the top, the top of the lodge and often the whole lodge would shake violently, and

⁷ For an example of use of ancestral helper on a war party, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 94-98.

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769 something (presumably the ghost) would sometimes be heard
sliding down the side of the tent—behind the curtain where the
787 performance was and landing with a thump. Soon after the thongs
with which the performer had been bound would be thrown out,
rolled in a tangled ball over the curtain at the spectators.

Next a pipe would be lit and offered to the ghost to smoke, and in the darkness the tobacco would be seen to glow up rhythmically each time the ghost drew on it. The ghost itself, however, at this juncture and throughout the rite remained invisible. The people present would finish smoking this pipe, after which the ghost would ask why he had been summoned. Most ghost helpers talked a whistling talk; some just in a natural voice.

If the ghost could answer offhand the question or questions asked it would do so. Otherwise it would tell the questioners to wait while it went away to get the information requested. As it departed through the top, the tent shook. While the ghost was away the people in the lodge would light the fire, have a smoke, put out the fire and sing the ghost song. On returning through the top with the usual shaking thereof the ghost would give the information asked. Usually such information was dependable, but not always; one such ghost we were told of had been a liar when living—"so you couldn't expect his spirit to tell the truth!"

After the ghost had given the desired information (or perhaps earlier in the rite, after it had had its smoke), food, especially puppy meat was offered it, and in the dark the spectators could hear the ghost eating. Finally the ghost would depart through the top of the lodge, which would shake violently as the ghost left.

After the ghost's departure, the performer would come out from behind the curtain, the fire would be re-lighted, the customary prayer before eating would be offered by the performer to the Supreme Being and other beings, all present would eat the food left over from the ghost's repast, and, after smoking and chatting a while together, all would depart.

In the ghost helper calling-rite carried out under emergency conditions, as on war expeditions, certain supplications and omissions could be and were sometimes made. The several detailed accounts of seances recorded by us indicate moreover that quite

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apart from emergency conditions, ritual variations from the above-described pattern occurred, perhaps in accord with varying ritual instructions received by different individuals from their respective ghost helpers.

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Before leaving the ghost helper complex and taking up the power complex, we may mention here one case, given us by Al Chandler, the only one of its kind we recorded, which shares certain elements peculiar to each. Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, was keeping a rib bone of his deceased uncle, who had been "a kind of medicine man." His uncle's spirit came and asked Little Man: "Why do you do this? What are you going to do with me?" "This is just for myself," Little Man replied. "I don't want to be that kind who have spirits. If I need you I am going to call on you and I want you to help me. I am not going to make you a popular servant (not going to use the rib in general practice). But if I need you, you can come and help me."

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Little Man, Al told us, made use of that rib one time when he cured his brother-in-law, old Turn Toes, of facial paralysis (caused by ghosts: cf. supra, p. 23). Brothers-in-law like to tease each other. So when Turn Toes came to Little Man to be treated, the latter took the rib, rubbed it four times, and in fun twisted Turn Toes' mouth way around on the other side. At this, Little Man's wife got angry and said: "You shouldn't do that to him." Little Man said: "I just want to make sure that the next time his mouth won't go crooked on this other side." So then Little Man put his brother-in-law's mouth straight and shoved his eyes up in place. And Al added: "You can see that old man [Turn Toes] today [1940] and he is all right." [Turn Toes has since died, in 1942 or 1943].

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Whether in the above case curing power was in the rib itself or whether the ghost of Little Man's uncle came and cured on occasions of use of the rib, is not clear. If the latter, as implied in Little Man's words to his uncle, at the beginning, we have a curing differing materially from the one to be described in the following on supernatural power, and much more akin to the Woodland Algonquian concept of the guardian spirit proper,—the guardian spirit who comes on call to cure and otherwise to help the possessor,

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769 —rather than the power-giving being who bestows upon the
 787 recipient power the latter can use at will without having recourse
 to or summoning the original donor. No historical interpretation
 is here being suggested. It looks, instead, that Little Man's deviant
 power in the case was merely an idiosyncratic variant of the ghost
 helper concept to which, not wishing to assume the normal public
 offices of persons with ghost helpers, he attached to curing func-
 tions not for all ailments but for ailments caused by ghosts.

PERSONAL SUPERNATURAL POWERS

787 Supernatural power was acquired by an individual mostly for
 778 success in war, accumulation of wealth, doctoring, gambling or
 love. It was obtained more commonly by quest, although often
 without quest, and could be transferred by sale, gift or bequest.
 It was bestowed by many different kinds of beings,—mostly
 quadrupeds, birds, snakes, rocks; in some cases, ghosts, inde-
 terminate "persons" or "spirits." How and from whom power
 was acquired differed appreciably in accordance with the several
 above-listed kinds of power. These differences we shall describe
 later in detail under these several categories: war, wealth, doctor-
 ing, gambling and love. Before doing so, we shall deal with cer-
 tain characteristics more or less common to all the above five
 categories.

782 In general, the Gros Ventres distinguished between three chief
 869 methods of fulfilling their desires and wants: natural ability,
 prayer and power. A person was supposed to make best use of
 his native physical and mental endowments to acquire skills, to
 use his wits, to develop his capacities and personality,—in a word,
 to rely on himself and to stand on his own feet, whether as food-
 getter, craftsman, warrior, gambler, or what not. His second re-
 course, where his inborn and acquired abilities fell short or threat-
 ened to fall short of enabling him to fulfill his wishes and needs,
 was prayer, primarily although by no means exclusively to the
 Supreme Being. The third choice, in the ideal order, was resort
 to power.

Turn Toes, for instance, as an orphaned boy used to be advised

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say: "It is not good to ask that kind of a career [from powers]. It would be a life misspent and would be dearly paid for. Man's dearest possession is life, and this would be cut off."

Charles Buckman had heard old men say that, although they had fasted and prayed over and over again for power, they had never had even a dream, and that this may have been why they had lived to old age.

According to The Boy, his father Lame Bull, when a young man, dreamed that the being who lived on Baldy Butte in the Bear Paw Mountains called him. So on one occasion when the Gros Ventres were camped near this butte, Lame Bull thought this was a good time to accept the invitation and go up on this butte and sleep. He was getting ready to do so, when his father gave him a sound scolding: "I always told you not to try to be a holy man, a man with power of that kind. Those who have such power do not live long. Forget about sleeping on the mountain and attend to the horses and lodge poles. We need you at home. Mind your own business. So Lame Bull did not get to sleep on the mountain. His father was boss."

Coming Daylight came back repeatedly to the same theme. "I am not a medicine woman [with power] and that is why I have lived to be such an old woman." "I am not sorry I refused the medicine power offered me in a dream. Medicine people die soon. It seems like they have a certain time to die and they don't live to be old like myself and Singer. These medicine people are not strong like others." "I never accepted any kind of power. Those who have power die too soon." "They [the beings] used to trick people into taking all these things [powers] because they wanted them to die. The holy dreams are very tricky."

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Singer gave her own experience. "I used to take a blanket or other offering and put it in deep water and pray that they [apparently the water monsters] would have pity on me. One night after I had just done this I dreamed that a person was standing there and that nearby lay the emaciated body of one who was very very sick. This person told me: 'I give you my body.' This is the way a being puts it in a dream when going to bestow power. Then the person showed me how to doctor, he used a pipe-stem which

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was full of 'nicotine,' and showed me how to draw out sickness through the stem. But I told him: 'I don't care to have any power, because people who accept power have only a certain length of time to live and it is always too soon [short].' " 787 778

Those who possessed gambling power in particular always became afflicted with some serious ailment of their legs and/or arms. There would be pain in and swelling of the joints, and the possessors would die before their time. This happened to Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, who had gambling power; while still in his prime his legs went bad, and even though he quit gambling to escape the penalty, he died prematurely. Red Whip, too, one of the greatest of those with gambling power, who died in 1912, died, the Gros Ventres believed, before his time. 753 787 778

It was believed that Bull Lodge, a great medicine man, did not live his life out.

A person, however, who had acquired power and later transferred all of it by gift or sale to another person or persons could thereby escape the penalty and live his life out. In this case the penalty would be transferred, along with the power, to the transferee or transferees.

Doctoring power was sometimes avoided or refused for other reasons than fear of or unwillingness to accept the penalty of illness or shortened life. Doctors, somewhat like keepers of the sacred Pipes, had to live restricted lives, abstain from certain foods, and avoid certain actions. Personal liberty was thus curtailed. Coming Daylight, when a young girl, was offered medicine power by a man four successive times in dreams, but she refused: "I did not want to be a medicine woman. I did not like it because medicine people suck on the affected part of the patient and have to swallow what they extract,—even though that man was showing me that I would have to extract with my hands, and not by sucking." Bad Bad Bull had power to cure the powerful "stomach-eating sickness" [cancer?] and used to suck out the small animal that caused it. In his old age he wanted to give this power to his sister, but she would say: "Oh, I am bashful. I would not be able to doctor that sickness. I would like to have the power so I could cure the pains but I would not like the part [or the curing pro- 787 756

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787 cedure] where you pull [suck] it [the animal] out." When she
 756 would say that people would tell her: "You should have taken
 the power and so gotten a lot of things [in payment] for curing
 that disease."

[831] Some women would refrain from asking power, particularly love
 power, from men who had it, because payment included allowing
 sex relations with the man.

787 While, then, the possession of powers brought the possessor
 778 some very worthwhile advantages, advantages differing in kind
 according to the specific power acquired, it had its drawbacks—
 chiefly illness and shortened life, but also restrictions on freedom
 and other obligations distasteful to at least some individuals. The
 advice, therefore, given by parents and councilors to avoid seeking
 power is understandable. So, too, is the fact that many neither
 sought power nor accepted it when it was offered by supernatural
 beings or by fellow-tribesman. Many thus clung more to what
 appears to The Boy and others to have been the ideal Gros Ventre
 philosophy of life: For the fulfillment of your wishes rely on your-
 self and on prayer, rather than on magical power.

We recorded a number of cases of refusal of power, some of
 them already cited above in passing. In no case of refusal except
 one did the person refusing suffer any evil consequences therefor,
 and two of our informants, Coming Daylight and Singer explicitly
 stated that such refusal curtailed no penalty. A person was quite
 free to accept or decline an offer of power whether made by a
 power-giving being or a power-possessing fellow-tribesman. Neither
 of the latter would take offense if the offer were declined.

756 Coming Daylight in various free chats volunteered many details
 778 of her own personal refusals of power. Her earliest experience
 787 and was living with her grandmother. "I used to sleep in a big
 lodge [with her grandmother]. While I was sleeping, a man came
 and wakened me. He had a bag of medicine on his back and told
 me, 'You can be a medicine woman.' The third time he appeared
 to me [in dreams], there was a person lying there, just skin and
 bones. The man [with the medicines] said to me, 'You could
 cure such persons as this one. You can take all these medicines,'

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and he spread out, all the medicines and told her what each was for and said, 'Do everything I tell you to do. Lay your hands on the sick and you will have it [medicine? cause of illness?] on your hands.' But I never wanted to take this and I would tell the man so. In the morning I would tell my dream to my grandmother, although I was not supposed to do so until after the fourth dream, and my grandmother would say to me: 'Do not say anything. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I did not want this power. I kept refusing it and for this reason after the man had appeared to me in dreams the fourth time he quit coming. I would have been great if I had accepted the power but I did not want it.—Maybe if this dream had come to me later I might have accepted the power and then I would have been like Good Singer [Coming Daylight's father's sister, a famous medicine woman of Coming Daylight's earlier years]."

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On later occasions, too, she was offered power in dreams, but she always refused and does not regret having so refused. "But," she said, "all I wanted was to live a peaceful life and get food easily. I have always been well fixed with things to eat and have gotten things easily, because I prayed for these things instead of taking medicine power . . . besides I had too many children to be a medicine woman. . . . My children were all Catholics. I too joined the Church, and I will be a good Catholic until I die."

Coming Daylight was also offered in a dream the power to "know children," that is, power to doctor women who did not want children and likewise refused it.*

On other occasions, an old medicine man, who had cured her infant daughter would offer to transfer curing power to her, at the implicitly understood common price of granting sex relations with him. "If you want that power," he would say, "you can come crying to me." But she used to answer: "Oh, I wouldn't do that because you are one of those who like to have women and you would try to have me."

One instance of refusal of power by Singer was noted previously. Another was described by her as follows. "Once when we had gone to Rocky Boy Reservation, I went quite a distance to fetch

* Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 129.

756 wood. Something in my sleeve kept biting me. I would sort of
 787 work my sleeve but it kept biting me. Finally I took off my dress
 798 and found it was a big spider with long legs. I did not kill it but
 just brushed it off. That night in a dream the spider told me:
 'Because you had pity on me, I will have pity on you.' But I told
 the spider: 'I do not care for any powers from a bug or spider.'
 Afterwards people told me I should have accepted the offered
 power so that I could doctor spider bites. If you accept a power
 like that you are shown in your dream how to doctor. Nothing
 happens if you refuse such power." Every once in a while people
 were bitten by spiders. Cora Chandler had heard of one such case:
 [165] "One fourth of July at Lodge Pole a woman got bitten while fix-
 ing her tent and died the same evening. Had Singer accepted the
 power offered her, she could have doctored that woman."

Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, once refused power
 from a rattlesnake to cure snake bites, but acquired power to cure
 seven dying persons. He had cured people and wanted to pass
 on what remained of his power to Al. But the latter in recounting
 the matter stated: "I did not want this power on account of the
 Catholic Church. I was afraid I might poison somebody. But the
 old man [Little Man] said: 'You will know all about it and what
 to do. All you have to do is to accept it. The rest will come to you.
 I am getting old and you might need it for your children. You
 could doctor your own children.' But the Catholics did not want
 you to do such things." So Al declined the old man's offer.

787 By three different men, who possessed love power, The Boy
 832 was offered this power, but in all cases he refused. His accounts
 follow.

798 "One old man lived near Bear Paws and when he came to my
 place, then on the Milk River, I used to accommodate him, al-
 though he would eat with my father, Lame Bull. He appreciated
 this and wanted to do something to repay the favor. So he said to
 me: 'I am going to give you my woman's medicine in payment for
 consideration of your service to me. I haven't anything of adequate
 value to pay you back.' He had a looking glass he used to do his
 stuff with. But I diplomatically refused. I told him: 'I do not like
 that kind of thing and never have, although I appreciate the fact

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that you are grateful and what you are offering to do for me.' The old man did not get mad or insulted, and he said to me: 'It is well you refuse this thing anyhow.' He did not tell me all the details (about the power and its manner of use), because I refused it.

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"Another old man offered me that kind of medicine [love power] out of my appreciation of my good treatment of him, and did not get mad when I refused it."

One other old man, who liked his liquor, was on one occasion given a treat of it by The Boy and another man. Soon the old man was feeling pretty good and started to get generous and said to The Boy: "Now, my son, I am an old man now and I appreciate your giving me this drink, so much so that I am going to give you something worth something." It was this love medicine. But The Boy "refused him nicely" and did not take it.

One final illustration of refusal,—"just an old time story," Coming Daylight called it who related it,—may be given, the only case we recorded of penalty believed to follow refusal. Perhaps even in this case the refusal was not so much of power as of a request to hold a Sacrifice Lodge.

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"A man was hunting north of the canyon [near the present St. Paul's mission in the Little Rockies] and was shown [by whom?] a nice clean big cave. In this cave were big strings, like a spider puts before he makes a whole web, that is one strand crossing the other at right angles. Right in the middle [at the intersection] was a medicine wheel, of the kind always used at the Sacrifice Lodge. The man just stood and gazed at it. He saw it good and it belonged to the Sacrifice Lodge. He camped in the mountains overnight. That night this wheel told him in his dream: 'You ought to take me so you can make this Sacrifice Lodge.' But the man did not take it. He went back to camp and told his dream and his refusal to take the wheel. After that he began to waste away with a sickness called 'cut away,' in which the flesh starts to disappear in a small place and just sinews show and then it spreads. It was a quick sickness and he died of it. They say this happened to him because he did not take that medicine wheel."

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From what has been recorded on the preceding pages it seems quite clear that the individual was under little or no supernatural

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787 or social compulsion to seek power, and was subject to no penalty if he refused it when offered to him by supernatural beings or by fellow-tribesmen. In fact, a certain amount of social pressure was brought to bear upon him to avoid and refuse it. Each individual had to make his own free choice, weighing the advantages against the disadvantages, the profit against the cost. The decision to seek or refrain from seeking, to accept when offered or to refuse, was entirely up to him.

554 We have listed the disadvantages, the cost. What were the advantages, the profit? Chiefly prestige, material gains or wealth, 778 and sex favors, depending on the type of power sought or accepted. The great warrior and the great doctor who attained eminence through power both enjoyed high prestige. Which of the two, warrior or doctor, ranked higher is hard to say. Both had very high standing and both were deeply respected. The Boy and Coming Daylight inclined to rank the great warrior a bit higher than the great doctor. In The Boy's word, "both had high standing, each in his own field. The warrior perhaps rated higher. The medicine man had standing, but only on certain occasions was he thought of. But a renowned warrior had the admiration of the tribe because he had risked his life and was a strategist and by his own efforts." According to Coming Daylight "it was the greatest thing to be a warrior and look for the enemy." Al Chandler leaned more to the view that "if a man was honest about his medicine,—so many times they [medicine men] faked and tried to got everything a person owned,—and was known to be honest, he was respected to the same degree as a warrior." All informants were however fully agreed that both warriors and doctors ranked high. Doctors who had power to kill and who were suspected of using it were more feared than respected. Men who had gambling powers ranked far below warriors and doctors in the prestige scale. Of one the most famous recent Gros Ventre possessors of gambling power The Boy remarked: "He was just a little fellow. He was just a gambler," and a man known to have gambler power could not be selected to the high office of Pipe-keeper. Likewise those who had love power were usually rather chary of advertising widely the fact as well as the source of their power.

Power thus in varying degrees conferred prestige, a much sought

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after good in Gros Ventre competitive life. Most types of power,—and not only power to acquire wealth directly,—brought material rewards. War raids had largely the purpose of acquiring horses, the main Gros Ventre wealth in earlier days, from the enemy.* Doctoring brought the practitioner large emoluments; gambling power netted the owner rich winnings. Love power, in addition to securing sex favors for its possessor, could also be a source of good profit through transfer by sale to others. Wealth among the Gros Ventres gave prestige on its own account as well as material ease and security. Further, wealth was inextricably tied up with prestige as goals sought through military, medicinal, gambling and love powers.

These were the chief advantages and profit or power which the individual had to weight against the disadvantages and cost thereof.

Many individuals, in view of the cost, neither sought nor accepted power, as we have seen.

Many others, however, men and women and even some young boys and girls, sought or accepted power, and such power was by no means confined to professional medicine men but was widely distributed among the laity. A few, but very few, children had power: the several cases recorded will be given later. But many women as well as men acquired it; what exact proportion of whole adult population is hard to say. The Boy, Thick concurring, stated: "Only a few men and women had ancestral helpers, but it was the usual thing for grownups, men and women, to have some kind of power." On another occasion, they said: "Not everyone tried to get power [by fasting on mountains] but only certain individuals. For instance, of three men only one might try, the other two might not care to try." On still another occasion, The Boy remarked: "Not all who slept on mountains got power. Lots got nothing; they didn't even dream. Only a few got power from such a quest. Some tried over and over again but never got anything. A man might spend five to seven days on the mountains and yet not even dream. If, say 30 or 40 slept on the mountains, only three or four of them might get power. Only a few Gros

* For discussion of Gros Ventres concept of wealth, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 73-79.

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778 Ventres, not many, had power. Males would start questing when
 787 young, but older men would also go out to seek power. After a
 man got to be really old, he no longer tried." Charles Buckman
 had heard old men say that they had fasted and prayed (on the
 hills) over and over again but that in spite of the sufferings they
 thus endured "they never had even a dream," and, in another chat,
 he remarked that "few fasted and prayed."

[184] It seems, therefore, that many men did not go out on hills to
 seek power (women never did so), and that relatively few even
 of those who did go were successful. At least, very few were suc-
 cessful in acquiring really significant or great power. On the other
 hand, many, the majority perhaps of both men and women, had
 minor power or powers of one kind or another, gotten initially
 otherwise than by quest or by transfer. Thus for example, Coming
 Daylight, who had repeatedly refused curing powers offered her
 in dreams and who insisted she was in no sense a medicine woman
 or "holy," this is, power-possessing, woman, had certain herbal
 curatives, for family use, given her by her maternal grandmother
 and by her mother's sister, Good Singer, a noted medicine woman
 of earlier days. Or, to use just one other example, many women
 and men had bought love medicine from other men or women.
 These minor powers, of many different kinds not always dis-
 tinguishable from non-magical knowledge and ability, were ap-
 parently very common,—"the usual thing," as The Boy expressed
 it above, "for grown-ups, men and women."

THE POWER QUEST

787 The favorite time of the year for going out to seek war, wealth
 827 and doctor power was spring. In The Boy's words: "It was known
 to be easier to get doctor power in spring. Everybody used to say
 that the young bear cubs used to wash their feet with the first
 rain of the spring. Bears were easy to get power from in spring.
 They were eager to give their power at this season. All nature is
 alive in spring. Grass, trees and leaves wake up. Hibernating
 animals used to sing before coming out of their winter dens. Bears
 come out of their hibernating dens after the first rain of spring.
 The body of even a human being is sort of stationary in winter

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time. All we can do in winter time is to look after our bodies. But in spring the body feels good, and when we look around we see the grass and leaves and animals appearing. There is a revolutionary change. They get power at that time. They take advantage of the newness of all nature. Everything is in blossom. Most animals then have their young. It is the most 'affectionate' season of the year. Nature smiles on all living creatures. Food and all that man uses in his life are easier to get then. Doctoring power was gotten more easily then than at other time—most who went out in spring did so principally and most frequently to seek war power, so some being or animal or something would give them power to be great warriors; or to acquire wealth in horses and not to be poor, or to get things easily without much effort. Some however went out chiefly to get doctoring power." While however spring was the favorite season for the power quest, it was not the only one.

Women never went out on the hills to seek power. This was done only by males. The latter would ordinarily begin to do so around the age of seventeen or eighteen years, or before twenty-one, just before reaching full manhood, most of them to get power to be great warriors. Young boys did not go out on the mountains. Only one case of a young boy going out to seek power was recalled by The Boy and Thick. He was about twelve or fourteen years old. He did not go far out, but did his crying a little way from camp and would return every night and sleep outside the tent where he and his people lived. Another such exceptional case was that of Bull Lodge, Garter Snake's father, who started his quest sleeping out in the mountains when he was only about twelve years old.

The place for those to go who sought war, wealth, or doctor power was the top of buttes, hills or mountains, some distance from camp. Certain of these elevated spots seem to have been preferred localities.

McCann Butte, the first butte of the Bear Paws, was specifically mentioned by informants as having been frequented by Stiff-arm, by Bear Nose, and earlier by Coming Daylight's grandmother's brother, the first Crow Bull, in their quest. Bull Lodge, Garter Snake's father, got doctoring power on Baldy Butte, the

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823 highest of the Bear Paws, and it was to Baldy Butte that The Boy's father, Lame Bull, was called in a dream. Another Gros Ventre, still living, sought power on Eagle Child Butte at the west end of the Little Rockies.

At three other spots mentioned by our informants quest for power was always a failure. According to Coming Daylight, "There was a rock [location not specified by her] that looked like a buffalo sitting. Many young men tried to fast and sleep there, but they claimed they never could because there was always something to scare them away. It was a spirit that looked like a person. They could hear people talking and there would be a light just like a camp fire. With all that they just could not stand it. No one ever stayed there."

Cora Chandler stated that "not far from Hays there is a steep hill called by the Indians, Electric Butte. Stiffarm used to tell all kinds of stories about that place and used to say that no one could sleep there for power because electricity came out of the rock(s) there." Stiffarm tried many times to sleep there but always had to run away. Coming Daylight's husband, Warrior, used to try to have thunder dreams and thunder power. She and he once went together [not questing] to Electric Butte. "There were," she said, "marks of electricity on the rock like at night when it storms." The rock had rolled down. "We did not touch it, except when Warrior put it back in place—During electric storms flashes come out of it."

The third place,—this one by exception not a mountain top,—was a hot spring somewhere south of the Missouri River. "Across the Missouri River," Singer said, "there was a big spring with no trees or anything [near it]. The stream goes away from this place in a curve. In the old days they [power questers] used to sleep there to get power from that spirit. But no one could ever stay because they were frightened when they would hear someone who had a big pot of boiling water say: 'I am going to have the legs,' or 'I am going to have the arms.' So the one who was trying to sleep there [for power] would run away. Long afterwards I went with some old women to see the place. It looked different than in the old days. The water used to go up and down, and once in a

while shells like those I wore for earrings would show. But the place was grown over with weeds and white settlers were there. The old women said: 'It is funny that they [the whites] do not hear the spirit getting [ready] a pot of boiling water for them.' They thought it strange that the white people could stay there."

Those few men who sought gambling power—it was never sought or possessed by women, we were told—sought it not on hill tops but in the lowlands, in the brush and timber along streams, from prairie chickens or ghosts there. The quester chose by preference a place where wild morning-glories formed a sort of bower or "tipi." The seeker would cry and when he got sleepy would crawl into the bower and sleep. In his sleep a prairie chicken or ghost would give him a song, certain rules to live by, procedures and rites to use in the hand game,—the only game in which gambling power was used,—and perhaps some powers of the legerdemain order. The person who acquired gambling power by quest would be very chary of revealing his quest experiences.¹⁰

Seemingly still more secretive and tight lipped were persons who acquired love power through quest. According to The Boy, our only informant on this point, "these fellows [who had it] were careful never to tell who gave this power. Sometimes they would say a 'person' gave it, but it was generally known that it came from bird or animal on the ground or in the water." On other occasions he stated: "Usually some animal gave love power," and questers "did not ask for success in gambling or love on the mountains, but on the prairies or in the brush along rivers." The being would give the quester a root to use in exercising love power.

A person before starting out for a chosen mountain top to seek major powers would, The Boy put it, "take a good bath and clean up his body well and put perfume on his body so he would smell good—those who did not use perfume would be told by the being on the mountain: 'Go away. You smell bad.'" He would also unbraid his hair and would wear no clothing except his moccasins and under his blanket his breechcloth. He took no weapons with him. "He took a lot of chances," Al Chandler commented, "because enemies might be close-by. But no enemy ever seemed to

¹⁰ For fuller details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 405-09, 416.

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787 disturb such young men. Everybody wonders how it was that
[823] none of the enemy ever ran on to a man in that state [that is, on
quest]." The quester also took with him a pipe with tobacco
mixture.

On the way out to the hill top, the young man was often accompanied to the spot by some older man, but only to help get the quester settled as it were. Once the quester was settled, the helper departed, and the young man had to carry on his quest strictly alone and in isolation. The quester's stay night and day alone on the mountain top was distinctly a test, not only of fasting endurance but of both physical and moral courage and stamina. There was danger of the known,—such as human enemies, snakes, or bears. Still more, there was danger from contact with the unknown, the supernatural. Questers often had fearsome and uncanny experiences while out on the hills. A concrete example, the experience of a Gros Ventre still living, as told by Thomas Main who had heard the story several times from Gambler, may illustrate the point. The incident occurred around 1900.

"The Gros Ventre [whom we shall call X] was with Gambler, an old Arapaho, on the Mission ranch near Hays. X wanted to sleep on a mountain top to acquire power. Gambler told him: 'Don't do it. You don't hold your mouth right. Your heart is small and your mind is narrow. You haven't nerve enough. You are physically courageous, but not morally so.' X replied: 'I'll show you. Sleeping on a mountain is easy. It is easier than riding a bucking horse that can kill me (and I'm not afraid to do the latter).' So Gambler said: 'I'll go with you and bring your horse home and attend to your chores while you are away.' So they went off together to Eagle Child Butte at the western extremity of the Little Rockies, taking with them a pipe, mixture, and blanket. On their arrival, Gambler built a little shelter for X to sleep in, and just before he left him said to him: 'All right, you've gone this far. Now carry it through. But I bet you that you will be back in your bed at the ranch before morning.' Gambler now left him to himself and went back home. X then started to walk around and cry, and after this to rest and smoke. Sometime during this very first night something happened. X would not reveal what it

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was, but he told Gambler afterwards: 'I could not stand that kind of thing!' X went home as Gambler had predicted and when Gambler went to X's house the next morning for the milk bucket, there was X. X would never tell what really happened that night." The Boy commented, "X was not the only one [quester on mountain top] who ran away; others did;" and added parenthetically, "No one has ever been able to spend the first night on Chief Mountain in Glacier National Park."

One legendary narrative we gathered,—“just an old time story” 787
the narrator, Coming Daylight, called it,—was well calculated to 539
put fear into questers.

“A certain young man slept out on the hills and he cried and cried. He had a shelter and went to sleep in it. While he slept a big snake came from the south to west all around where he slept. The snake ate up the young man and left only the bones. Where the snake had come from it had made a bald path with no grass at all, just like a rock.

“This young man had told his friend: ‘Come tomorrow and bring me a pipe.’ The next afternoon his friend came and saw the snake track and got scared. From outside the shelter he called to his friend. Getting no answer he went in. There he saw the skeleton. So he called out yelling for the young man’s people. Everybody came, and the young man’s folks especially were scared when they saw the snake’s track. When the young man’s folks saw the skeleton they started to mourn. His friend took a quilt, wrapped up the bones in it, and carried them home. The people had a hard time to quiet the parents.

“So the friend said: ‘I will go and sleep there tonight and I’ll carry a gun.’ So he went to the place, and in the evening he started to cry and cry. At night when he was crying and crying, he lay in the bed but did not go to sleep. He had his gun ready.

“After a while he heard a great big noise, like a big rattle. It sounded scary. The snake came in the same track. When it got to the door, it kind of lifted up the rock and threw it aside. It had a big shiny horn and sort of blinded the friend, and its eyes were yellow shiny, and it was a great big snake. It was as big as a human being and its rattler was great big. When it knocked the

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- 787 door down, the man shot it. It just writhed and he emptied his
539 whole gun on it.

"He stayed there until the morning. In the morning he started to holler for the people. They saw this big snake and burned it up. They thought this man very brave."

- 787 Of equal importance with isolation was concentration of thought. "If," said The Boy, "while on the mountain top the quester was thinking about his wife or about other affairs, he would get nothing [no power] for he did not have his mind on it—If a person is playing cards he must keep his mind on playing else he will not win. In like manner, when a man was fasting out on a mountain he had to concentrate his mind on what he was after—He went there to pray, to ask for help for something above the human."

- 787 The first ritual act after arrival at the mountain top was the
982 prayer with the pipe. This rite was described by The Boy and Thick as follows: "When a Gros Ventre went out in the mountains to seek power he always took along a pipe to use in prayer. He asked from above that the being who owned the mountain or hilltop would be commanded to grant this power. He took the pipe along to pray to the Supreme Being,—it was the idea that the Supreme Being ruled everything but his ruling was systematic or by plans. He seemed to believe that there were lesser beings who sort of managed [ruled] details of the whole situation. He [the quester] would start out, in his very first prayer [by praying] to the Supreme Being asking the granting of his petition, so that the one to whom he went, the one who owned or lived in the hill would be sort of forced or commanded to grant the power that was being requested. The pipe was first offered, with the stem pointing upward to the Supreme Being. Then the quester lit it and blew the smoke upward [toward the Supreme Being] and afterwards downward to the Last Child. But there was no comparison between the up and the down prayer. He held the stem pointing downward to the Last Child to give him a smoke. The Last Child was of the order of the killdeer [vastly inferior to the Supreme Being]. After giving the smoke to the Last Child in a sort of important way, he would offer the pipe to the hill, with the stem pointing not

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upward or downward but to the hill, with a ritual gesture and would make his request direct to the one or ones inhabiting the hill or mountain top and tell this one or these ones what [power] he actually wanted." 787 782

In all the above the quester was following the general ritual and social Gros Ventre pattern for making requests. Such was the ritual pattern in prayer with a pipe. And whenever a pipe was offered to a fellow-tribesman it was offered with the stem toward him. The offering of a pipe to another when asking something of him was an "emphatic way of pleading." Thomas Main here remarked: "If I wanted to borrow money of another and were afraid my request would not be granted, I might offer him a pipe when asking for the loan and so reinforce my request." 787 576 276

Bull Lodge, when seeking power on a butte, made offerings of material goods and of the first joint of his left little finger. Little Man made offerings of a bit or bits of his flesh. 787 582 307

While up on the mountains the quester, alone and praying and concentrating his thoughts on his quest, would fast, neither eating or drinking, and would walk around crying, shedding real tears. He, or the man who had first accompanied him to the spot and then left him, would make a rude sleeping place of rocks and twigs and branches. This sort of "nest" was called his "call-for-power lodge." When the quester got weak or fatigued or sleepy, he would lie down in this "nest" and doze or sleep. Al Chandler stated: "Their [the quester's] sleep is not sound, any little thing wakens them. They are expecting something all the time and they look for it." Usually power was given during such sleep, although in some instances when the quester was wide awake. The power-giving being would speak to the quester and, usually at least, appear to him.

Sometimes a quester would be told by the being whose "house" was the mountain on which the man was questing: "Here is the kind of power I have. This is all I have. That other one [being] has the kind of power you wish. Go over there." And the being would name some other butte or mountain. Thus, for instance, a man going to a given mountain to seek wealth or war power might be offered doctoring power, and if he did not take this

787 latter he would be told by the offerer to go to some other designated mountain to get what he was seeking.

The length of time a man would stay out on the mountain varied, the range being apparently from one to seven days, and of course the nights too. Power might be given in full daylight as well as at night. Various informants mentioned one to seven days, five to seven days, seven days, two to four days, four days. Sometimes questers were given power the very first day or night; others, only on a later day or night; others still not on the first quest at all, even though they remained five or seven days, but only on a following quest or after repeated quests; others, finally, never got power, not even a dream, even though they went out over and over again on the hills to seek power. Great medicine men got their full powers as a rule only after a number of years of repeated sleeping around on high buttes.

The recipient of power ordinarily got three things from the donor: a song, instructions on the rites to be observed in using the power, and some material object which was a symbol, and/or instrument vehicle of the power.

533 Singing, as we noted earlier (supra, 79), was originally
778 gotten by the Gros Ventres from Earth at the time of the great flood and was confined to sacred seasons. Later it degenerated and became secular as well. But among the birds and animals it did not degenerate; it kept its pristine sacredness. And these birds and animals and other beings would give their songs to questers for power, to each successful quester a specific song for his own use in exercising the particular power given at the time.

As The Boy explained it: "From time immemorial every Gros Ventre rite or ceremony began with song. . . . And when the Gros Ventres went out on the hills or to the forests to seek power and were granted a hearing and were going to be given power by rock, forest, animal or other creature, the granting always began by a song. . . . It was remarkable how they [the questers] could memorize these songs that were sung [to them] by these several creatures, and the recipients never forgot these songs and always had them foremost in their minds and never altered them in any

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way. Others of course, learned them from the one to whom they were first given, but always sang them the same unaltered way." 533

An individual might have more than one kind of power, and hence more than one song. A doctor might have more than one doctoring song; Stiffarm, for example, had many. At any given time a great number of doctoring songs were in use by the many doctors. The four doctoring songs we recorded are only samplings. Only the person who acquired a power by quest or transfer had the right to sing the song or songs connected therewith except when requested to help sing with the owner at say a curing rite. A person who had acquired power songs could, if he desired, sing them in his lodge as bedtime songs. 778

The recipient of power was given and taught by the power-donor not only a song but also detailed instructions on other ritual procedures to be followed in exercising the specific power. These procedures will be described presently, in our section on power use and ritual.

At the time when power was bestowed, the recipient also got some power object. Sometimes they were given to him directly by the supernatural donor; sometimes the donor instructed the recipient where to find or how to make the power object, or just told him what kind of object to use. This object was often spoken of as the medicine or power of the possessor. So far as we could discover, the object was conceived of as more or less identical with the power or as the tangible embodiment, vehicle or instrument of it. The power object was consistently brought into play when the possessor made use of his power, as will be described later. A recipient might obtain at any given quest more than one such object from the donor. 787

These objects,—such as a weasel skin, otter skin, root, and so forth,—were commonly kept by the possessor in a skin bag as the possessor's medicine bundle. The Boy made a gift to us of the badger-skin medicine bag of his father, Lame Bull, who used to keep peppermint and a thunder-stone in it. 778

In many cases power objects were swallowed by the power-recipient when first given to him and were so retained within his body until he forfeited his power through breach of code or in-

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struction or until just before his death. In the latter case, these objects would come out of his body, usually his mouth, and if they were living things would shortly thereafter die, after which the person himself or herself died.

Thick's sister-in-law, an Assiniboine, whose Gros Ventre husband had been a sacred Pipe keeper, violated the rules by joining the Ghost Dance religion. Thick witnessed her death. "Just before she died, she said to her husband: 'Get me a dish.' She spat into it. We looked and found there a living (?) thunder-stone she had spat out. She spat again, and this time a little round rock. She spat a third time, a stem of fresh green peppermint. 'Now,' she said, 'I'll die. I have violated the rule laid down for me.' And so she died."

A coyote had given Al Chandler's adoptive father, Little Man, yellow paint to swallow. "I saw it," Al stated, "when Little Man was dying because it came out then. . . . It was about 2½ inches long and about 2½ inches around. It was pure white clay on the outside. It was like you make a dough of the white clay and put the yellow inside and roll the white over the yellow."

Stiffarm and Little Man's brother were also present when Little Man was dying and knew this paint would come out when he died. They said: "We will see what made this old fellow so powerful." So they took this roll of white clay and broke it open, and the yellow paint poured out. "The brother was one of those who did not believe in such things," Al added, "and he certainly was surprised."

In the course of the curing procedure as carried out by Sits Holy, a miniature bear would stick its paw out of his mouth and would growl loudly enough to be heard all around; as carried out by White Weasel, he pulled a little animal, his medicine, out of himself; as carried out by Good Singer, she hit herself on the chest and a bead, her medicine, came out of her mouth, and at the end of the rite she swallowed it; as carried out by Little Man, a hail-stone, given him to swallow when he received child-birth power, was later disgorged and given to his patient to swallow.¹¹

Lame Bull had been given doctoring power, to be used only

¹¹ The Crow Indians, The Boy stated, likewise swallow power objects.

after a certain period of probation. He, however, broke the rule and doctored before his time was up. A night or so after he had doctored a spider came out of his ears and a thunder-rock out of his mouth, and so he lost his doctoring power.

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Occasionally in connection with the power quest the right would be given to the quester to paint his lodge in a particular manner.¹² Among the Gros Ventre such sacred or holy painted lodges were relatively rare and were thought of very highly. We recorded one song (No. 88), a wordless one, which belonged with Bull Lodge's sacred lodge. Bull Lodge had been "invited" to quest for power at Baldy Butte, the highest peak in the Bear Paws. The being who gave him other powers also bestowed upon him his own lodge, with instructions how to paint it and the song to sing while it was being painted. Coming Daylight's father had a sacred lodge around the bottom of which were painted the figures of men, each figure the same and each with a feather in the head. The upper part was painted red. "At the tip of the ears of the lodge were things hanging, and feathers in back. The back part had a cross (morning star) and the sun."¹³

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What has been said in the preceding pages about the circumstances of Gros Ventre quest may be illustrated by the following account given by Al Chandler of that of Little Man, his adoptive father:

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"When Little Man first went out to seek power, the old medicine man (his tutor in the matter) told him: 'I am going with you.' So when they got out in the hills, maybe a whole day's travel to this place where he wanted to go, this old man asked Little Man where he wanted to go to fast and Little Man chose a place not very far away. So they went together. This old man cut his (Little Man's) flesh, took a pinch,—(some did it 3, 6, or 9 pinches), and prayed each time he cut a bit of flesh off. He told Little Man: 'Nobody is going to come after you until your time is up. If I tell you three days, nobody is coming after you until this time is up. In the meantime use your whole heart and don't get

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¹² There was a distinction between the sacred painted lodges and the lodges painted with war deeds. Cf. Flannery, 1953, pp. 68, 102.

¹³ For illustrations of sacred painted lodges, see Plate 4.

● 787 scared. Don't let anything scare you away. Don't try to come down before that. Somebody will then come after you.'

"They get pretty weak from fasting and somebody has to come with a horse. They just pray and pray and cry and cry and sleep a little,—but their sleep is not sound, any little thing wakens them. They are expecting something all the time and they look for it.

"So Little Man stayed there for two days and two nights as he was instructed to do for this first time. They had gone up there pretty early in the morning and he stayed all the first day and towards evening he was kind of tired and his voice was kind of hoarse so he laid down and was lying on his back with his eyes shut and praying while he rested. After a while he got rested and got up and walked around and prayed and cried. He kept that up all night and didn't see anything or hear anything.

"Next day the same thing. Towards noon, not quite noon next day, he was lying face down and he heard something, just like something puffing, coming towards him. He said he knew right away what it was because from what he heard old people say, the bear when it travels puffs a whole lot as if it is out of breath. So he knew it was a bear. He didn't pay any attention. He just lay there and kept praying and praying. The bear went in a circle right around him. Pretty soon the bear came over. Little Man had a little oblong nest outlined with rocks piled up about two to three feet high, and open toward his feet. This is called his "call-for-power lodge." After the bear had come around several times it must have sat down because Little Man didn't hear him any more. He wasn't supposed to look up to see what it was that came to him, because if he did he might get cold feet. You just have to take whatever it is and just think hard about the power you want.

"So when the bear came over he put his paw right on Little Man's head. He went away again and soon after he came back again and put his paw on Little Man's back just at the level where his heart was. The bear went off again and Little Man noticed that he went straight back from his head. The third time when he came back he touched the soles of Little Man's feet. He went off again the same way and not so very long after he came back and this time he sat down towards the opening of the nest about 10 or 12 feet

away from it. The bear told him: 'Get up now. Sit up.' So Little Man did and the bear said: 'I heard you. I have been listening to you why you are here. I pity you and I know what you want and it is just me. I will give you this power. This medicine I am going to give you, this root is for the sickness caused by a gut getting plugged with a seed or something you eat.' 787●

"Little Man thought: 'I wonder how I will know what this medicine is, and how I can get it.' The bear knew what he was thinking and told him: 'No. It will be like this. You look around and see all these hills and landmarks and all, but it is not like this. But some day you will be at the place. I don't know when or where, but when you are there you will recognize the place and you will get this root. I will show it to you when you are asleep. I will show you the place where the root is, the lay of the ground, and how the plant of that root looks. I will come to you in a dream.' The bear held his paws out in front and said: 'One of these (pointing to his claws) I will give you.' So he told him just what he could use this claw for: 'If you think this root medicine won't work by making beverages, you can use this claw to kind of operate with.'" So he got all that from the bear. First when he saw this bear sitting, the bear was painted from his brows over the forehead and head and the bear said: 'That is where you should paint when you doctor anybody, and this claw you must wear on a buckskin string over your shoulder and you should always have the point out.'

"Little Man was honest. He never faked and everybody liked him. If he couldn't cure you he wouldn't want anything. He would wait before he took what a person paid because he wanted to see if the patient was really well.

"A year after this in the summer he got this same old man again and told him what he was going to do, that is that he wanted to go out again and asked him how many days he would advise him to go this time. This old man told him: 'Well, I will tell you. It all depends. You know there are many ways to get this medicine power. You are old enough to know that. Lots of times these young men, when big clouds come before an electric storm, go out in different directions and cry out there and pray. Well that is one

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787 way. If you want to try that, do it one day and that is enough.' So the old man told him: 'Let me know this evening what you think of it, or if you have already made up your mind what you want to do.'

787 821 "The old timers could pretty well tell you what kind of weather you are going to have. Little Man said: 'Well I would like to go our right away today. But I don't think there is any chance of an electric storm. I would like to try that.' So the old man said: 'Well, I will see if I can find any signs of a storm or not.' He looked all around everywhere like he was looking for something. The sky looked clear. He stood there for a long time and looked around. Pretty soon there was a small cloud coming up and he said: 'You are a lucky man. You watch that cloud. I think there is going to be a big electric storm and maybe hail too. Do you think you want to try it?' Little Man said: 'Yes, I will try it.' So the old man told him: 'Now you want to be very brave. Don't let anything bluff you, because there are very few who can go through with it. It is something harder to bear.' Then he said: 'You have to be perfectly naked. You go anywhere on those hills you want. Take off your clothes and go now because the storm is coming now and it won't take long for it to get here.'

787 "So Little Man went home and took off all his clothes except his moccasins and put on a blanket or robe. He then went out, and the electric storm started from the distance with rumblings and lightning. There were a couple of other young fellows out there and he could hear them crying in different directions from him. Just as he got up there, it was just like lightning right over his head and thunder all around. He cried all the harder and didn't think of getting scared. He took off his moccasins and blanket and walked around crying and praying.

"While he was doing that, all at once great big hailstones came and it certainly hurt him. He had bruises all over him. When the hail was just over he laid down, kind of tired, and just a little while after that somebody told him: 'Take that hailstone there right by you and swallow it.' He looked and sure enough there was a big hailstone right by him. He was not to chew it but to swallow it whole. He took it and thought: 'Well, if you tell me

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to do that I guess it will be all right.' He did it and it went down easily. Then he was told: 'You go to sleep. I will tell you what this is for.'

"So he stayed out there and fell asleep. He saw an old fellow, grey-haired, coming who could hardly walk he was so old. This old man told him: 'That which I gave you is going to be all in your line. You are going to be a medicine man. This medicine is for those women or girls who should not have children for some reason; they are afraid or don't like to go through that and they always want help from somebody if anybody can do anything for them to keep them from having children. You will have to use your own judgment on that. If you think that a woman shouldn't want to do anything like that, if she is strong and young and should have children, you should not help her. You just tell her that you haven't got anything. But there are some who really need that kind of help. They are weak and won't make good mothers. Those are the ones you should help. That is what I give it to you for. I give you just one [hailstone] but every time you use it there is always another one. All you have to do is to sing the proper song (this person taught him the song, but I do not know it) and just take that hailstone from your body, that same one you swallowed, and give it to this woman to swallow and she won't have any children after that.'

"Little Man used this medicine twice and he said he didn't know where it came from but each time he used it [the hailstone] there was another one there for use the next time. My mother's sister's first child pretty near killed her and she was one he worked on. Another woman came to him who was in the same situation and he gave it to her and she never had more children. Lots of times women came to him, but he knew it was not because they were too weak to have children, but were just women who liked to run around and he didn't want to help that kind. This person who gave him that power had told him: 'When you are giving that thing to the women whom you help, paint yourself red from half your eyes up your forehead and head; below that paint all yellow.' If he would not have painted, the power would not have worked. If he omitted anything it would have been no good,—like if he didn't sing the song, it would be no good.

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787 "The following summer when the real hot days, probably July, came, he went out and fasted and prayed and cried. He had gone to the same old man and asked him and the old man gave him three days and three nights this time. So he went out and took one of his friends with him to help fix the rocks and to take his clothes home. They don't have a thing there, even any weapons. They wear the g-string, but no clothes.

"Anyway, Little Man went for this three-day and three-night crying. After they got everything ready, his partner went back home and had been told to return on the fourth day in the morning. So Little Man started in the same thing and all that day nothing happened. Of course he had little short dreams, but he didn't think anything of those.

"The second day in the morning when it started to get hot he was lying on his back resting, with his eyes shut and he was praying. He felt something crawling over him. He felt it ice-cold and rough right across his breast, but he didn't move. He just kept on praying. He knew what it was from the feel of it, it was a snake. So he started to tell that snake: 'Old Man, don't feel bad because I am not going to accept you. It isn't because I don't want any of your power, or I don't like you, or I don't want you to bother me, but there is something else that I am here for.' So this thing went over on the other side and Little Man opened his eyes a bit and sure enough the snake was coiled up about three feet from him. It was a big rattlesnake and he kept on talking to him and pretty soon the snake went away. After a while he got up to see if it really did go away. Of course he was scared of it, but he didn't let on.

"So he started in again crying and crying but nothing happened all day until that night. It was kind of moonlight and he could see that either a coyote or a wolf kept coming around him but it didn't come very close, only just close enough for him to see it. Along toward dawn of the third day this coyote started to howl close by him and it would go around and howl at four different places in the circle. He got up again and started praying and crying and when he got tired he laid down and fell right asleep. He was all in. Way in the afternoon this animal woke him up.

He was just all in by this time and couldn't talk or cry. When he tried to cry he made only a weak, faint noise. This animal told him: 'My name is Mountain Coyote. That is what my friends call me. Well, I heard you. I have been around here. Maybe you didn't notice me but I have been here. What is it you want? Although you have said what you want, I want to hear you talk. What is it that you want?' 787 ●

"So Little Man said: 'There is one thing I am working for. I want to be an honest medicine man. I don't want to take anything that would fool people. If you want to give me anything I want it to be honest.' The coyote said: 'That is me. I want to be honest. If I give anybody anything I will give it to them in an honest way. I am not going to cheat people or fool them.' Then he told Little Man: 'Stand up.' And the coyote sort of sat on his hind legs and he said: 'Take a good look at me.' Little Man looked at him and the coyote would put his paw to his mouth and blow and he started painting himself all over, first the right paw, then the left, and was painting himself all over a bright yellow, with real yellow paint. When he got through he blew on his paw again and rubbed from side of his eye back towards his ear, first on the right side and then on the left, with white clay. So he said: 'There is lots that I am going to give you. You have been here going on three days now and I will give you all I have. Now first I am not going to tell you what medicines you are going to use because you will see them yourself what to get and where to get them and you will know for what sickness they will be. I will give you seven persons to cure. Even if the sick person is just toward the end of his life, and is taking his last breath, maybe an hour or two before he dies, you are going to bring him back. You can cure him. You have to have a lot of pity for them before you can do that. You cannot say just because that person over there is dying I will go cure him. No. It is not like that. They have to come and ask your help.' So he told Little Man just what to do: 'You have to paint like you see me. I give you this song' (he taught him a song). Then the coyote gave him what he was supposed to keep and Little Man had to swallow that."

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OTHER MEANS OF ACQUIRING POWER

787 While in the majority of instances power, as initially acquired
778 direct from power-giving beings, was gotten by quest, in a considerable minority of cases, it was so gotten in first instance without quest.

A man might be offered power, without quest on his part, when away hunting, or war raiding as in the following given us by Singer.

"A bunch of young men went afoot on the warpath. One of them had a pain in his leg, and it was so bad he could not travel further with the party. So they fixed him a shelter of wood, like they used to make, so he would be warm, and gathered some water in little paunch bags and hung them there, and piled up a lot of wood and dried meat, and left him there.

"He got so bad he couldn't even move his legs. As he slept he dreamed that a lot of little children came in and they had a boss. So the young man said: 'Where are you going? I am having a hard time with my leg-ache.' 'I had pity on you,' said the boss, 'so I came,' and then the boss added: 'I will give you my body [that is, Singer explained, I will give you some power]. As long as you live you will never have children, but I give you this,' and he gave the young man a little horn spoon and showed him a root, and said: 'When a woman is going to have a child you can always doctor her. Just one drink and the baby will be born.'

"When he woke up he found he was cured, so he hurried and caught up with his friends. They were surprised.

"This young man called his dream visitors 'little children,' but they were really 'ghost men.'" This is the only instance these beings were ever known by either Singer or Coming Daylight to have helped anybody.

Powers of various kinds were acquired without quest by keepers and co-keepers of the Flat Pipe and Feathered Pipe, as previously described. Not the least of these was doctoring power. Bull Lodge, for instance, was a medicine man before he got the Feathered Pipe; "But," Al Chandler added, "even if you were not a medicine man before you got the Pipe, you would be after you got it."

We recorded no instance of women going out in the hills to

fast and cry for power. Coming Daylight, when asked about the matter, just laughed, and said: "they [women] never go out like men do." Commonly women were offered doctoring power in dreams at home, as in the several instances already noted. Singer was once offered power after she had made a sacrifice. Sometimes a woman was offered unsought power when wandering around outside camp or on the hills during mourning or in anger at her husband.

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"Sometimes," said The Boy, "a woman would get angry at her husband and would go away and wander around alone, not fasting but eating when she could and drinking. Sometimes such a woman would get power. Something or some animal would take pity on her and give her power. . . . Sometimes too a woman who had been captured by the enemy would make her escape and on her way back home would sleep out alone and would acquire power . . . a woman does not ask [by questing on mountains] for power. Power comes to her. When mourning for relatives and sleeping out [away from camp] and suffering without food, somebody might take pity on her and give her power without her asking." "Women," remarked Singer, "When they lost a loved one, would go up into the mountains and cry themselves to sleep, and that is when a lot of them would get power."¹⁴

Like women, very young children did not go out on the hills to fast for power. The occasional very young boy or girl who got power got it without formal quest. Coming Daylight's offer and refusal of power at the early age of eight years has been previously recorded. The Boy mentioned one case in which during a smallpox epidemic all the members of a certain family died except two children, a boy and a girl. The two children continued to stay alone at the spot. A bear came. The girl, after the two returned, became a "holy" woman.

Keg, the boyhood friend of Lane Bull, The Boy's father, was given power, without his seeking it, one early morning while he was out looking after the family horses. The boy, then only about ten years old fell asleep and dreamed he saw a big hand game going on for high stakes and one fellow taking all the winnings. On

¹⁴ For examples, see Flannery, 1953, p. 206.

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787 looking more closely Keg saw that the fellow was he, Keg, himself.
 778 The fellow said: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat
 as an object (button) to hide." Then Keg woke up and saw nearby
 a covey of prairie chickens at their mating dance. Keg was so
 given gambling power by the prairie chicken(s), and was a very
 successful gambler, from that time on.¹⁴

778 Acquisition of power directly and in first instance from a power-
 424 giving being gave the acquirer right of exclusive ownership and
 425 use of the power. The power was a gift from the being to the
 human individual, and became the latter's property to be ex-
 clusively held and used by him, as would any gift given him out-
 right by a fellow Gros Ventre. The owner could however transfer
 it, in most cases, by sale or gift. The Boy and Thick explained
 the main features of the system as follows: "The individual who
 acquired the power, and he alone, would use it. He would not part
 with it unless someone bought it from him. . . . In case of pur-
 chase he would teach the buyer the secret of how to use the
 power. Then too the owner of the power might transfer it without
 remuneration to one of his children if the owner lived to old age
 and had [living] children; he might do this rather than have the
 secret of the power die with him and do no one any good." On
 other occasions The Boy, speaking particularly of doctoring power,
 further explained: "While a doctor had many power songs, no
 other doctor had a right to sing these songs, unless the doctor-
 owner transferred his power to the other. . . . If someone else
 knew what plant a given doctor used and tried himself to use it,
 he could not get results, because he would not know the songs
 and rites to use with it. . . . Even though he should know the songs
 and rites as well as the plants, it would have been very wrong to
 try to use them. . . . Only the one who had [acquired] the power
 had the right to practice it. If everybody had been free to practice
 it, there would have been no use for the doctor to have gone
 through such hardship [fasting, etc.] to acquire it."

Power acquired in first instance as a gift from a power-bestowing
 being, although exclusively owned by the recipient, could be under

¹⁴ For further details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 407-08.

War power usually included both a positive aspect, outstanding success in killing, wounding and capturing enemies and in taking booty, especially horses, and a negative one, luck in escaping injury. Little Man's brother had power to make his horse run so fast in war that no other horse could overtake it. 778 721

Those who sought wealth power asked mostly to have many horses, not to be poor, and "to get things easy without much effort." 778 556

"My grandmother's brother," Coming Daylight related, "the first Crow Bull went to McCann Butte in the Bear Paws to sleep. The people were camped at the bottom near the lake, and from an opening in the mountains on the other side of the lake they saw a lot of white horses come to the lake. Crow Bull was told in his dream: 'These are all your horses.' It is claimed that everybody else saw them too. After that Crow Bull always had white horses. People gave him white horses and he brought white horses home from war." 787

Cora Chandler had heard a similar story about Bear Nose who slept at the same spot. He saw (in a dream, probably) a lot of prairie dogs and was told: "These are your horses." Cora commented: "I knew the day when Bear Nose had only buckskin horses,"—of the color of prairie dogs.

On both the preceding cases, the two men who got power only to own all these horses, although, Cora thought, Bear Nose also had lots of other powers.

As regards war-power ritual we gathered only a few details, mostly from Al Chandler regarding his adoptive father, Little Man, and from Garter Snake regarding her father, Bull Lodge. 778 721

Little Man got from his brother who was killed in battle the latter's war medicine. The brother's power objects were: the dried skin of a sparrow hawk [Flaco Sparverius] with the head, claws and feathers; a shirt, tailored like an ordinary shirt, but kept painted yellow all the time and with "little holes all over it even on the sleeves and with hawk feathers on the shoulders and some on the back." The yellow paint and holes presumably symbolized the predominant rufous and buff coloring and spotted belly and sides of this fast flier. When the brother went to war, he would put this dried hawk skin on his back, and take a "little fuzzy feather" from the wing and tie it on his horse's tail, and the power

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756 power to cure "some kind of gland trouble;" others, to treat "a bursting blood vessel."

A professional doctor was under certain limitations, restrictions and taboos, and liabilities.

756 The being or beings who gave doctoring power would at the same time warn the recipient not to begin practice at once. "If,"

787 The Boy stated, "a person accepted the offer of medicine power, he would be told not to begin doctoring for so many years, but to keep his power a secret for the time being. . . . It would be known that a given man was sleeping around on high buttes. After a number of years he would declare his time was up, would keep his secret no more, and would start to practice. But even then very powerful doctors would usually not reveal who gave them their power." Coming Daylight, it is true, thought the recipient could start practicing at once, but Singer and Al Chandler were quite positive that deferment was required. According to Singer, "the one who gave the power for medicine would tell the receiver when he or she could start curing. It would usually be after at least four years." According to Al Chandler, "they [power-giving beings] give them [recipients] so many years to pass before they can do medicine work."

Lame Bull lost his doctoring power as a result of doctoring before his years of "probation" were up. The wife of the brother of his "best wife" was ill, and this wife threatened to leave Lame Bull unless he doctored that woman. Under such duress, Lame Bull agreed to doctor her, and he cured her. After he did so he was told in a dream that he had lost out and would not be a doctor because he had doctored before his time of probation or deferment was over. A night or two after, a spider came out of his ear and a thunder-rock out of his mouth. Lame Bull was not keeper of the Flat Pipe at this time.

In some instances, at least according to Coming Daylight, "when a man got some doctoring power he would tell his wife. . . . She would be the one to call her husband's power to the attention of others."

756 Supernatural power to cure very grave illness was often bestowed under limitations as to number of cases. Thus White

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756 were those of her husband, her daughter, and her grandfather, and her maternal uncle, Crow Bull, respectively.

"My husband, Little Man, did not believe in Indian doctors. He had never been sick, but once somebody put [bad] medicine on him. There was a bad man among the Indians at that time. . . . My husband knew and everybody knew that this bad man had done this to him. My husband had a pain all the time right near his heart and sometimes he could not move on account of this pain. Occasionally, too, he had a hemorrhage. He used to be in such pain through this thing that he knew it was some work of a medicine man. So he had a dream and in it he was told that he should go out on the hills and swing round and round on a pole, as they do (cf. infra, pp. 393-394), and that he would then get well.

• [187] "I called a woman doctor named Goes Back. I got a nice horse and hitched it at this woman's place as payment. This woman doctor said: 'I am just going to doctor you [Little Man] once.' Other doctors had been trying to cure Little Man but they could not succeed because the one who had put the medicine on him was extremely powerful. Goes Back talked to the one who had given her her power and said: 'You told me that I could use this medicine work just once; and that then I would get a particular person well.' This is what had been promised to this woman.

"So she said: 'I will ask for a sweat-lodge, like a man.' Only medicine men used to ask for a sweat-lodge. She said: 'I am going to doctor in this sweat-lodge.' Several people went into the sweat-lodge. I attended to the opening and shutting [of the door thereof]. There were only certain rocks that they used and these were heated until red. Someone else attended to this. The patient was inside the sweat-lodge and the medicine woman invited some others to go in there. Except for the medicine woman, only men went in. I sat beside the door, but on the outside.

"They sang, and I heard the woman praying: 'My nephew has suffered a long time. Please listen to me. You promised that I would get some person well by doctoring just once, and I want this to be that one time.' When she got through doctoring, that is, sucking, she said: 'Lift up the curtain.' So I lifted it up and opened the sweat-lodge, and one of the men there said: 'I too never be-

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782 anyone so goes to be tortured someone else goes along. It was
785 awful when they so went to pray and cry and sacrifice themselves.
304 Running Crow went with Little Man, as the latter's grandfather,
to pierce his breast and insert the skewers whereby he was attached
to the pole by a thong. [After that was done] Running Crow gave
Little Man a push and Little Man danced round and round the
pole. Running Crow and Stiffarm, who went out with him [just
as helper, not as grandfather], left Little Man, as was customary,
alone. Then sometime during the day the two returned and gave
Little Man a smoke, but the latter did not eat or drink anything.
He would be hungry and thirsty and would run around without
even moccasins on his feet. It is an awful sacrifice. He would dance
until the skewer pulled out of his flesh. Then he would be tired
and would sleep and dream.

"Little Man went through this rite on account of a dream. He
had been sick [heart pains and hemorrhages] and had dreamed
he was going through the rite, and in consequence did later actually
carry it out. He carried it out at Chinook where we were all living
at the time. During the rite his mother sang war songs in her camp.

"Little Man had not tortured himself in any big celebration
[Sacrifice Dance]. He did this only alone on the hills. It is hardest
this latter way. It takes longer to break off [for the skewer to tear
through the flesh] in the heat [sic]. It is awfully hot out in the
hills and the self-torturer goes barefoot, without moccasins. He
dances west to east, counter clockwise, from sun up to sun down.
It is not so hot in the lodge at the big celebrations [Sacrifice
Dances]. It is a greater thing to do it alone.

"The time my husband, Little Man, did this I too was away
on the hills. I pitied my old man [husband] and did not eat. I
came home in the evening to cook for him. We always help a
relative when he fasts like that. My husband's mother and sister
were at home together with another woman relative, Ed Black-
bird's wife."

[787] After Little Man's self-torture was over, he was told in a dream
the exact kind of leaf (or root) to use for curing his hemorrhages
and just where it was to be found, Coming Daylight was able to
find it, and Little Man was cured.

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"Lame Bull said that the old men had told him that the Gros Ventres used to hold this test once in a while, but the only one he witnessed was the one described. He also said that they were going to hold this test again when he was a middle-aged man and were all ready to do so, when a war party came back, some of whose members had been killed in battle. So that spoiled the occasion. And after that, the test was never held."

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DREAMS, VISIONS AND AUDITIONS

Gros Ventre for "a dream" is *kana:të*; for "a vision," and apparition seen while you are awake or "even while you are sleeping and somebody comes to you," *be:tānhatsä:na'*, "something sacred I saw." In the following pages we are for clarity's sake distinguishing between dreams occurring in sleep and visions and auditions occurring in waking hours. What, if any, importance the Gros Ventres themselves attached to the distinction is not clear, although they of course were fully aware of it, as is obvious from their explicit statements in the cases recorded by us. It is quite clear, however, that such dreams, visions, and auditions played a major role in their magico-religious culture, and entered into it in numerous ways and on numerous occasions. Illustrative cases will be given presently.

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Especially in the spring time older men, after going to bed at night, would command silence in the lodge and would sing and pray, informally without ritual observances, and would pray among other things for some good dream and for deep sleep¹ so that they would not wake up before the dream was over.

Dreams in which power was offered or imparted were supposed to be kept more or less secret. Such secrecy was not, however, called for, it seems, regarding other dreams.

Dreams as recorded by us fall into two categories, those in which gifts or messages were imparted to the dreamer by some being, and those in which interpretation of the meaning of the dreams

¹The Arapaho, we were told, call this kind of sleep "thick sleep." In 1948 Tom Main said that the literal translation of the Gros Ventre word for "deep sleep" is actually "thick sleep." [R.F.]

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787 had to be made by the dreamer. We shall take up these two categories in turn.

In the first category fall power-bestowing dreams and many of those connected with name-giving and ear-piercing. Power was usually bestowed during a dream, in some cases however while the recipient was awake. In other dreams, songs, information, instructions, warnings, invitations, commands or permissions were given by supernatural beings.

Two wordless songs, numbers 33 and 34, sung without accompaniment of drum or rattle, and gotten by The Boy's father, Lame Bull, in dreams were recorded by us as sung by The Boy. Lame Bull had many songs of this kind, but these were the two he used to sing most frequently. In the records the song is repeated only once; in the full rendering it would be sung four times. These are bedtime songs.

It was in a dream that Lame Bull was told the war party he led would kill five of the enemy and that he saw just where the enemy were located. In another dream he was told that he had forfeited and would lose his doctoring power (*supra*, pp. 284-285). As the result of a dream the grandmother of Mary Ereaux made a special kind of bag, snake-shaped, in which to keep the navel cord of the latter's son.

Singer on one occasion, when her daughter was ill and she [Singer] had promised to amputate the end joint of her little finger as a sacrifice to save the girl, had a significant dream.

"I had promised," Singer said, "to do this but my husband, Iron Bucket, had kept putting it off. 'Leave it for a while,' he would say. So one night I had a dream. So I woke my husband and told him immediately: 'Now look. I saw this old man coming and he said: "You promised me that finger a long time ago. You are going to look like this," and I saw a person with white hair painted red (a sign of old age, she explained to us). This old man got after me and told me what I would look like, if I didn't keep my promise.' So we got kind of scared. . . . The old man was representing the sun because it was to the sun that I had made the promise."

In quite recent years, shortly before her death, Thick's wife, The

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Boy's sister, could hear the Flat Pipe. "It bothered her to think it was alone [and relatively neglected] and in her sleep it would call her." 787●

During our earlier contacts with The Boy, 1938 to 1940, he was considerably concerned as to whether he "was doing right in telling about the Flat Pipe to the white man" and he "thought hard" on the matter. In the summer of 1939, after receiving a letter from one of us, regarding the Flat Pipe, he had a dream.

"I saw," he said, "a big crowd of people gathered. I stood by a lodge where the crowd was. I went into the lodge and saw there my father and old Curly Head. I sat facing them. My father said: 'Are you telling the history of these Pipes to the white man?' I said: 'Yes.' I waited for further questions from my father, but then I woke up."

The above version of this dream was given us in the summer of 1939. A fuller one was given, as follows, in August, 1940.

"I came from about a southerly point to a big crowd out in the open. On arrival I at once pushed people out of the way and elbowed my way into the heart of the crowd. I wanted to know what was going on there. The crowd was not in a circle but in a sort of oval. When I got inside the crowd—I saw my father, Lame Bull [d. 1908], and Curly Head [d. 1937] sitting together in the place of honor [opposite the lodge door]. Lame Bull was sitting to the right of Curly Head. So I walked up to them and sat down facing them. Lame Bull said to me: 'Is it true that you are telling the story of the Pipes to white men?' 'Yes,' I said 'That's true. I am doing so now.' I felt a terrible silence there and got scared. I felt that Lame Bull would scold me. Before any further word was spoken, I woke up, and then tried to interpret the dream. Other dreams did not impress me as much as this one. I thought much, and wondered if it was proper to tell the story of the Pipe, if it was against the dignity of the Pipe and reverence for the Pipes, if it was against Gros Ventre principles."

"In the old days," said Coming Daylight, "we used to paint ourselves every morning [a custom of which now little remains]. ... I painted myself when I was going to pray to the Flat Pipe for my grandchild, and when I went to sleep that night I dreamed

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787 I saw that paint and a voice told me: 'Why don't you pay any attention to me any more?' So that is why I have started painting again. I used always to paint and would like to do so now, but I am afraid my children might be ashamed of me."

In some dreams, a being communicated to the dreamer commands, summonses, requests, invitations, or permissions. Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, when someone had put medicine on him and he was having hemorrhages, was told in a dream that if he would torture himself he would get well. He was also told what kind of root or leaf to drink for the hemorrhages at the time he tortured himself, and exactly where it was to be found. Coming Daylight went for it and found it. Then he took it and got well. At this time, too, "he got the name," she said, "for our little boy, Skinner." He used never to believe in such things and here this came to him like that. When he told me about the names for our little boy, I threw this up at him and said: 'I thought you never believed in such things!' But he just laughed, and I told him: 'That is just the way you know things. You ought to start now and practice things for the children's sake.'"

Lame Bull, it may be recalled, was called in dreams by the being who lived on Baldy Butte in the Bear Paws, to go up there and quest for power.

One of The Boy's dreams, experienced in the winter of 1939-40, straddles our two dream categories. It contained an invitation; it also called for interpretation.

"I had a dream," The Boy said. "In it a person came to me wrapped up in a white man's blanket. The blanket covered even his face and extended way up over his head and the top of the blanket was blowing round as if by the wind, and was all covered with snow as if the wearer had come in out of a snowstorm. He came in and stood by my bed, and said: 'Well, I have been sent here to come and get you, because where you are living now everything is bad and out of order. You are not enjoying your life here. Where I came from is a good place.' I recognized this person as John Baptist, my deceased nephew, the son of my sister, Mrs. Thick. John Baptist scolded me, but I said: 'No. I don't

" Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 146.

want to go where you want me to go. I still have small children to look after. I still have business here. I have not finished giving [to Flannery and Cooper] the record of Gros Ventre life. There are many other things to tell [them]. What is the matter with you? You are shivering and cold. It is warm in here. It is not proper for a ghost to be cold.' John Baptist said: 'It is very cold. That is why I am covered up and shivering.' At this he uncovered his head. But I knew all along who it was. I recognized his voice. He looked just the same as when he was living. Then I woke up.

"The third night after this I took sick. I woke up at night with pains around my nipples as if there were two sticks there and as if the veins under my lower jaw were big. I got up and rubbed my face and neck and the back of my head. I was in great pain. I did not want to disturb anybody. I lay down and slept. When I woke up my face was twisted [facial paralysis].

"I thought a lot about the dream I have just told you. I nearly concluded that it might mean my time to die would come in the winter season. I am not afraid. I am resigned. If I live through next winter, I feel I will go past the crisis and live longer."

Dreams were often interpreted as having prophetic or other meaning. Singer, on one occasion, dreamed; she said, that "we were all traveling and that my little brother fell off the travois and got killed. I was screaming in my dream: 'Oh, my brother! Oh, my brother!' My mother woke me up and asked me: 'What is the matter?' I said: 'Oh, I was just scared in my dream about my little brother.' My mother was worried for fear this was a bad sign. The next morning when we moved camp that is where someone we knew got killed by the raiding enemy."

Certain other dreams were variously interpreted. On one occasion when Coming Daylight and her young grandson went with Snake Woman to gather bitterroot, a fellow driving a cow waved to them. The next morning Snake Woman said: "I dreamed I was married to that fellow who waved at me." And actually he did try later to live with her.

Singer gave the following account:

"I and Axe Handle, my Assiniboine husband, once went swimming down the Milk River Valley. After we got home and went

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787 to bed I dreamed that a little short man with shaggy hair all pushed back came out of the water where we had been bathing. He made a motion as if to grab me and said: 'I am going to take you.' He was grabbing at me to take me into the water and I was just hollering in my dream and calling my husband by name. He wakened me and asked: 'What is the matter?' I replied: 'This little man is trying to take me.' So in the morning my husband said: 'I am going to put some offerings in the water.' I had a nice silk handkerchief and a pair of 'pearl' earrings. So we sewed the earrings in the handkerchief and then we went and prayed and prayed, and my husband said: 'We give you these so you won't take her.' We held on to the offering until the praying was finished and then put it in the water, and it disappeared quick, as if somebody had grabbed it."

Once when Axe Handle, Singer's husband, was ill and was expecting to die, "he saw someone," she told us, "in his sleep, come down from the sky and walk in, holding in his palm four little red objects. He held his hand before Axe Handle and said, 'Here. Eat this up.' And Axe Handle took them like pills." After this Axe Handle recovered.

Waking visions and auditions were common, not however too common, it seems, as meaningful dreams. Sometimes as we have seen, power was bestowed on the recipient when awake, although more frequently in a dream.

"Once," said Coming Daylight, "we were camped along the Milk River where the woods stops. Everybody in those days used to get up early, when the sun was just peeping above the horizon. So one morning my grandmother went for water, very early, just before dawn. She looked up and down the river. She saw something right down in the water. She looked more closely. It was a buffalo fawn, the small yellow-brown kind. It stood in the middle of the water. This was a vision (be:tānōhatsa'). She started to pray to this fawn and while she prayed the fawn looked at her. She prayed and prayed that the fawn would have pity on her. And then the fawn looked at her. She wasn't mourning or anything at that time. She was just going about her ordinary routine. It was good when anyone had a vision like that. My grandmother told this vision to those in her lodge but she did not tell everybody

You were not supposed to tell everybody. I think that the vision is what made my grandmother live so long [to the age of 101 years it is claimed]. I think the fawn gave her 'grace' to live that long." 787 •

We recorded two instances of mass vision. One, of white horses coming down through an opening in the mountains, has been previously described. The other was related by Singer.

"The Gros Ventres were traveling and they got to a place where there is a mountain on both sides. They were going to look for buffalo. The men went out and then heard a man hollering for all the others. They all looked and saw a herd of buffalo coming from the sky. Iron Bucket [Singer's husband] was one of that party. The herd dropped close by. When people see anything like that they say it is a holy thing. The men chased these buffalo and killed one. It was bigger and fatter than the real kind and that is how they knew. They talked about this a whole lot. They had not prayed for this. It just happened. The man who first saw these buffalo gave a war whoop and then yelled: 'Come see!' The others all looked and here the buffalo were. When the buffalo landed, the earth shook and the dust just came up."

Auditions occurred, as well as visions. The woman's voice heard in the sweat-lodge rite and during White Weasel's singing has been mentioned previously (supra, p. 97). In the latter case, Mary Ereaux' mother and an occasional other person could hear the woman's voice, but others, such as Mary herself and White Weasel's wife, could not.

"The Gros Ventres," according to Singer, "used to come across a big lake toward the southwest. It was a holy lake because in its deep waters they used to hear sounds of dogs barking, and horses neighing, and young men giving a whoop, and drums beating, like they were singing. The people used even to see visions in this lake. Since the whites came around the Gros Ventres do not know what has become of this lake." [823]

OMENS AND DIVINATION

Through both omens and divination, knowledge of the future or of hidden or distant things is believed to be gotten, and both

● 787 have at least some touch of the "supernatural" about them. In the senses in which we are here using the terms, omens are more or less conventional interpretations of casual events, of happenings that occur independently of activity, or effective initiative, on the part of the interpreter; divination, an interpretation of means specifically resorted to and set up by the interpreter.

The line between omen and divination cannot always be sharply drawn, nor can it always be sharply drawn from the Gros Ventre point of view between natural and "supernatural" interpretation of casual events or of set up means. We shall deal first with omens, and after that with divination.

Some portents of the future are quite clearly of the purely natural order in Gros Ventre thought. Examples of such natural Gros Ventre portents are weather signs like the following. The aurora borealis is a sign of impending bad weather or storm; if it occurs a given night, on the second night after there will be a change of weather. A lot of rain, in summer, or a lot of service-berries, choke-cherries and so forth, means much snow the following winter. If the blackbirds, crows, and other birds leave early, cold weather may be expected early in the fall. Whether the winter would be severe or mild, could be told from the condition of animals' fur in the fall. Old fellows, in the olden days, are said to have been able to foretell the day when a storm or the Chinook wind would arrive.

Whether the following are conceived as of the natural or supernatural order is doubtful. A big shooting star portends sickness to come; of a little one, nothing is thought. When Singer was a little girl she had one or two grey hairs; her grandmother wanted to pull them out and told her they were a sign she was going to live to old age.

The following seem more suggestive of the supernatural, so far as we would judge the native attitude. If you hear someone saying your name, especially if there be added the call, "Come on!" and you look around and see nobody, this is a sign of your death. "If a dog comes and whines around and kind of cries, or if it raises its hind leg and urinates on a lodge, clothing or a person, this is unlucky." "If a family dog whines around the door and

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howls at the moon, someone is going to die; the dog will be killed to head off the misfortune." It is also unlucky if a dog and a coyote "kind of quarrel, the one howling frequently and the other answering back." Hoot owls were thought to be ghosts (supra, p. 27). If an owl alighted on the tent or house, or hooted nearby on a bush, this portended the death of someone. If one or more crows flew across one's path and cawed when one was going out hunting, this meant good luck.

Of the supernatural order were also many of the intimations imparted in dreams, and many gotten in connection with the sacred Pipes, such as those from the quivering of the pipe bundle, the look of the human face in the Feathered Pipe bundle, and so forth.

An eclipse of the sun was an omen of some coming sickness, some epidemic like smallpox. Coming Daylight stated that her old grandmother "always noticed that an eclipse [of the sun] was followed by smallpox." Coming Daylight described her own personal reaction during an eclipse.

"I had been sent after water. . . . All of a sudden it got dark. The first thing I did was to grab on to a bunch of willows. I did not know what had happened and just kept hidden there. It was so dark I could not see to go anywhere. I heard people hollering: 'Come this way. Where are you?' But I was so frightened I just hung on to the willows as though someone were going to take me away. Finally it got to be lighter, and I took the water home."

Singer's account of her experience during an eclipse [the same one?] gives some details also on tribal belief and practice. She and another young woman were the only ones at home.

"We noticed it was getting darker and darker, although it was in the afternoon about this time of the year [mid-August]. We began to scream and cry and we did not know what was going to happen. It was really an eclipse of the sun. The men, and everyone left in camp at the time, just lay down on the ground. Finally they got up and said: 'That is a sign we are going to have smallpox.' Everybody who had a gun just shot at the sun. The reason for shooting was that it [the eclipse] was going to bring some kind of disease. They thought it was a warning." Coming Daylight here explained: "When they shoot they are trying to scare it to get rid of the sickness."

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- 787 . At a number of spots in and around the territory of the Gros
192 Ventre are cliffs on which the pictograph beings (supra, p. 20)
made designs that could be interpreted as omens. The Boy
enumerated the following localities where such picture cliffs were
or are: one near Clagett on the Missouri River; another around
Sun River; another southeast of the Sweet Grass Hills; another
far up north in the forested country; another around the mouth
of the Musselshell River; another north of the Musselshell;
another north of the Yellowstone (north of where the Crow now
are). Singer also mentioned one not far from Hays. Unfortunately
our time schedule did not permit us to visit any of these spots.

The Gros Ventres explicitly distinguished these drawings from those recognized as made by Indians and from other somewhat similar things. Some such designs made by Indians in caves and on cliffs can be seen today: two, for example, in the Little Rockies, one on the south side and another on the southeast. Tracks of animals, "right in the stone," may also be seen: at one place on top of one end of Snake Butte, some miles east of St. Paul's Mission. The Gros Ventres do not know what these are.

Likewise, at one end of the Larb Hills, there is a big flat rock described as about 5 feet by 10, the upper surface of which is about waist high from the ground. The rock itself is not limestone, sandstone, or granite, but of a rarer mineral seen only once in a great while; of light color, and looking something like cement, and looking to be "artificial." It was discovered by the Gros Ventres only in recent times, apparently from the Assiniboine, who found it on directions given them by some Cree half-breeds. On the surface of this flat rock are seen tracks in the stone of a child, of hoofed animals, wolves and dogs, and of animals the Gros Ventres cannot identify. On one of the vertical sides of the rock is a dent, shaped like a lodge. The lodge is painted in colors, and in front of it, at the door side, is the figure of a man standing with a pipe extended upward. Some young Gros Ventre men have spit on their hands and tried to rub these lodge colors off, but without success. On the opposite vertical side of the flat rock are represented the sun and moon, the Dipper, and some other stars. The present-day Gros Ventres have tried to divine the meaning

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of this rock with its designs, but to no avail. They just say of it "it is something holy." They do not know what if anything the pictograph beings may have had to do with it. 787 172

Before the death by lightning of a certain young man, a drawing was seen, on a pictograph being cliff, of a lodge, and inside a headless man, and a zigzag line to the top of the lodge. In another case some Gros Ventre hunters, recently, when out hunting, were wondering if the pictograph beings still predicted, and so they went to one of their cliffs and there saw so depicted a train, and in front of it a headless man. On their return after their hunting was over, they went to the Agency and there heard that a certain man had been killed by a train. Just in recent times, too, a Gros Ventre band was traveling (not as a war party) to the Crow reservation and being near the pictograph beings cliff at the mouth of the Musselshell, went and looked, and there saw pictured a water monster with long horns and a human being riding on its neck. (One on its head and another on its snout, according to Singer.) They interpreted this to mean: "Someone is going to be drowned." When they reached the Crow, they learned that a Gros Ventre young man had drowned crossing the Yellowstone somewhere near Billings, and the place where the river comes out of the mountains. Singer once saw on one of these cliffs a picture of their camp, with a gun pointing right at the middle of the camp; afterwards a person in the camp did actually get killed.

In general, if someone died from war or drowning or other cause, and a group were discussing the death, it would be said: "The pictograph beings drew and predicted this long ago."

There was relatively little divination among the Gros Ventres as compared with the many kinds of it among their Algonquian linguistic kin of the taiga. Scapulimancy was absent; none of a half-dozen or more of our informants to whom we broached the subject had ever heard of it. Scrying occurred in the form of peering into badger blood. When a war party had gone out on the trail, they would kill a badger, lay it on its back, slit it from throat to crotch, and leave the blood to gather in a pool around the belly. Those of the party who wished to peer into the pool of blood did so; but there was no obligation to do so; if some did not wish 787

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787 to do so they did not do it. They peered one by one. If the scryer, on peering into the surface of the blood, saw himself headless or scalped, this meant he would get killed, and he would not go on the expedition but would turn back and go home. If he saw himself reflected clearly, this meant good luck. "Usually," said Thomas Main, "the scryers did not tell what they saw." "It was claimed," Charles Buckman remarked, "that the skeptic [one who saw himself scalped or headless, but nevertheless continued on the expedition] actually got killed."

Bear heart divination was described by The Boy, Charles Buckman, and Coming Daylight as a well-known practice.¹⁸ Apparently badger blood divination was taken much more gravely and seriously by the Gros Ventres than bear heart divination.

A final type of divination is from Coming Daylight. The grandson of her old grandmother with whom, as a girl, she and her sister were living, killed a female porcupine in which were two embryos. "The old woman said to us two girls: 'Come here both of you.' So she held my dress open at the neck and loosened my belt, and threw the foetus down the neck of my dress. It went through without stopping, and my grandmother said: 'When you have children you will have an easy time. See how quick it went through.' Then she did the same to my sister, but in some way the foetus got caught, and the old woman said: 'Now, you see. You are going to have a hard time. You are going to have slow childbirth.' And sure enough, these are the ways it turned out for us [respectively]."

THINGS TO DO AND TO AVOID DOING

784 Under this somewhat loose caption we are grouping certain acts
789 done in order to bring about desirable effect or avoided lest undesirable ones follow. How far they were in Gros Ventre thought considered "supernatural" it is hard to say. Most of these observances and avoidances were seemingly viewed as of the non-sacred work-a-day order. At least, in most of them there appears to have been no explicit or even implicit appeal to a supernatural being or resort to supernatural power. The few in which a suggestion of

¹⁸ Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 163.

GROS VENTRE GAMBLING

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Gambling power was of a lower order of dignity and solemnity than power obtained by fasting on the mountains and hill tops. It was taken less seriously, more lightly, and, if we may judge from attitudes today, with an undercurrent of amused jocoseness. It was not, as was power gotten on mountains, transferrable by the original possessor to another, or at least it was not transferred. For one reason others did not usually want it, on account of the ailments and shortened life its possession entailed. A man who was known to have such power was further handicapped: his fellow tribesmen would not ordinarily gamble against him and so his opportunities for participation were few, being limited mostly to games played by the Gros Ventre with other tribes. In such intertribal games, however, he would become a popular champion, and would derive therefrom a certain prestige as well as material gains. The possession then of gambling power, while to a certain limited extent an asset to its owner, was in more respects than one a decided liability. 525 789

It may be added here that while those who possessed supernatural gambling power are spoken of today by English-speaking Gros Ventre as "professional gamblers," in reality there were no professional gamblers among the Gros Ventre even in the old days, professional, that is, in the sense of making their living or most of their living at gambling.

The following three narratives, related by The Boy, illustrate various aspects of gambling power.

Narrative 1. Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, had gambling power. While he was still in his prime, his legs started hurting him. To escape the penalty he quit gambling. But in vain. His legs went bad, and he died before his time. 525 789 539

Narrative 2. When Lame Bull, The Boy's father, was a young boy about ten years of age he had a friend of about the same age, called Keg, to whom he was much attached. Keg, like other boys of his age, had the daily chore of rising long before daylight and driving out the family horses away from camp to graze. One morning he was awakened very early and was told to drive the horses out. He did so, but when he got out to the grazing ground he decided to steal a few winks lying face down. So he fell asleep, and all at once he started to dream. He dreamed that he saw a big hand game going on with high stakes and one fellow winning everything. Keg looked at this fellow closely and saw it was he, Keg, himself. This man spoke to Keg saying: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object [button] to hide." [857] [787] ●

Then Keg woke up and looked around, and there right near where he lay he saw a covey of prairie chickens doing their mating dance and making a whirring noise with their tails. When he got back he said to Lame Bull: "Let's play and see whether what I dreamed is true. I'll put my helper to the test." Lame Bull tried to guess Keg, but Keg would make a noise like a prairie chicken and thereupon

THE GROS VENTRE SHAKING TENT

REGINA FLANNERY

The Catholic University of America

121 **A**LTHOUGH the concept of the shaking tent is now known to be a widespread one, relatively few details are available on this rite as it was practiced in the Plains area. The following [15] data, gathered among the Gros Ventres of Montana in 1940 from old and middle-aged informants who had often witnessed the performance, are offered in an attempt to fill in the picture as regards this one tribe.

787 When speaking English, the Gros Ventres refer to the rite as a "seance" and to the performer as a "spiritualist" inasmuch as it was carried out by a person who had access to the spirit of a deceased relative. The Gros Ventre word for spirit is *tsatsuvaa*, which, incidentally, is the same word they now use for radio. The voice of the spirit can be heard, and, while the spirit cannot be seen, its presence is otherwise manifest by the noise of its activities. Among the latter we note especially the shaking of the tent as the spirit enters and leaves.

[91] When information was desired regarding missing persons, the whereabouts of the enemy, etc., a spiritualist, who might be either a man or a woman, was asked to invoke the spirit over which he or she had control. The pertinent questions were asked and the spirit would supply the answers. There were two general methods of procedure. The so-called seance could be held either in the big dwelling lodge or in a small structure built for the occasion. Furthermore the performance was more or less elaborate, details differing according to circumstances, the individual spiritualist, and even the "personality" of the spirit invoked. But one invariable feature was the shaking of the tent.

The two accounts which follow will illustrate the general pattern as well as the differences in procedure. The first concerns a seance held in the winter at a time when this particular family

~~GROS~~ VENTRE SHAKING TENT

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group was more or less permanently encamped. It was told by Mrs. Warrior, now a very old woman, as one of her childhood memories and was not elicited by questioning. 787 [24]

"Many, many years ago when I was a small girl, my father had gone on the warpath with several other men. When winter came they hadn't returned. So my uncle (mother's brother) went to an old woman, Good Singer, who was known to be a spiritualist, although she was famous for other medicine powers as well. She consented and the seance was held in the lodge. My sister and I and our aunts and relatives were all there. 787 539

"A curtain was hung across the back part of the lodge and Good Singer was bound with ropes tightly knotted, then wrapped in a blanket so that only her head stuck out. She was behind the curtain and began to sing a certain song. She told us all to sing that song four times. I joined in the singing. When we finished we heard a humming sound and scraping and all kinds of noise through the opening at the top of the lodge. The top of the lodge began to shake and all at once we heard something slide from the top down behind the curtain where the old woman was, and land with a thump. That was her spirit, that is, the spirit of her son who had died long, long before.

"As soon as they heard the thump my uncle said: 'Here is the offering,' as he handed behind the curtain the pot containing a pup they had killed and cooked. We could hear the dishes rattling as the spirit ate. Soon all of the bones were picked clean and the spirit tossed them over the curtain so that they landed in our midst. The spirit then complained that they had tied his mother so tightly, and as he untied her we could hear the sound of the ropes as he worked at them. Then the ropes too came sailing over the top of the curtain. They were all knotted up in one bunch, and, try as they would, they couldn't unravel it.

"The spirit then complained again: 'Why did you tie my mother up so tightly?' and then asked: 'What did you call me for?' My uncle said: 'Well, I called you because these men went out on a war party and some, including Holy Weasel, didn't return. I want to know where they are and what became of them.' Then my uncle lighted a pipe and put it under the cur-

787 tain. When the spirit finished smoking he put the pipe outside
539 the curtain and my uncle said: 'Well, I want you to hunt my
brother-in-law to see where he is or what became of him.' Immediately the spirit made a noise and we could hear it going out of the top of the lodge which shook violently again. The people all sat quietly smoking and listening. Then old Good Singer called from behind the curtain: 'Sing again four times.' So they began to sing and I joined in. After the fourth repetition the spirit came back in the same way as it entered the first time, dropping down behind the curtain and landing with a thump. Every time the spirit goes in or out the top of the lodge shakes. Then the spirit made the exclamation which the Gros Ventres use to indicate that something terrible has happened, and continued: 'You should have told him [Holy Weasel] to stay at home. He and his party were killed. They were raiding the enemy and came across some Piegan. The latter made believe they were meeting the Gros Ventre in a friendly way, but when they got close they killed all the party except one who escaped.'

"Just before the spirit made this last speech, two little boys in the lodge had been playing during that ceremony and the spirit told them: 'Be quiet because I am going to tell you what happened.' And before they knew what happened to them these two little boys landed outside the lodge. The spirit must have pushed them out! And everybody was certainly quiet after that."

The second account will illustrate some differences in procedure when a spiritualist was consulted while a party was on the move and on the look-out for enemies. It was told to me [1/3] by another old woman informant, Singer Sleeping Bear, incidentally to a long story of one of the journeys made by members of her father's group when she was a small girl.

"The party got as far as Canada and stayed all night. One of the men filled his pipe and took it over to another man, Rising Cross, and said: 'Now here. I am giving you the pipe. I want you to invite your spirit. I want you to ask your spirit if the road is clear (that is, if there is no enemy in sight).' Rising Cross took the pipe and prayed a few moments. The other men

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made a small rounded lodge of willows, just like a sweat lodge. 787
A few of them went in there with the spiritualist who just sat 539
there with them as one of the group. He did, however, smoke
the pipe and sing his song. Finally this little lodge shook so hard
it almost fell over. It was like a terrible wind. Then a voice
said: 'Yes, yes, what do you want?' Rising Cross said: 'Well,
we want to know if the way is clear. We are looking for the
enemy. How will the way be near where they are?' So the
spirit said: 'Well, if you do as I say you are going to kill the
chief (the father of a captive Piegan who had married among
the Gros Ventres). Go up over the hill and you will see the plain
just covered with lodges. If you don't turn back immediately
after you kill that one man, you are going to have bad luck.'

"So the young fellows jumped on their fastest horses and
went off. They found the situation as described by the spirit.
The man whom the spirit mentioned was riding up the trail along
the coulee accompanied only by a woman on horseback. When
these two had gotten some distance from the lodges in the plain,
the young Gros Ventre took after them and killed the man, but
the woman wheeled her horse and sped back to the camp to give
the alarm. The Gros Ventres said to one another: 'Now you
know what the spirit told us. It told us to run just as soon as
we killed him.' And the majority was in favor, but one man was
obstinate. While they were arguing the enemies approached and
were able to overtake most of them. Only a few escaped. It is
always someone who doesn't believe the spirit who ruins the
party."

That there might occasionally have been some room for 787
doubting the validity of the information received through a par- [15]
ticular spirit is suggested by a comment made by another in-
formant, Al Chandler, a middle-aged man. He had mentioned
an old woman spiritualist, David Man's grandmother, and said
that she was honest about it and her spirit could be depended
upon for the truth. He added, however: "But a man I knew
used to hold seances and had his own brother as his spirit. This
spirit always lied. When this brother was living he was a liar,
so you couldn't expect his spirit to tell the truth!"

787 As to the way in which the power was acquired, Al Chandler
 791 explained as follows: "It was customary to take some hair or a
 relic of a deceased relative after the body decays. (The Gros
 764 Ventres did not use to bury their dead like they do now.) Some
 would have a bone, others a whole lock of hair, and so on. Now
 if a person happens to take something the spirit likes, the spirit
 appears and asks: 'Why do you want that rib (or whatever part
 one takes)?' The man or woman might answer: 'I want you
 real near me and I want you to help me whenever I ask you.'
 That person gets in a kind of trance while the spirit talks to him
 that first time, and the spirit gives him a particular song which he
 must sing when he wants to invite the spirit."

Apparently some leeway was allowed the individual in accepting the power, if the following information from Al Chandler can be taken as an indication.

"My adoptive father had the rib of an uncle of his who had been a medicine man of some kind. The spirit appeared to my father and asked: 'Why did you take that? What are you going to do with me?' My father replied: 'This is just for myself. I don't want to be the kind of person who owns spirits. If I need you myself I am going to call on you and I want you to help me, but I am not going to make you a public servant.' And that spirit did help him, personally, once or twice, but my father never got tied up in the ropes [as in the case reported by Mrs. Warrior]. By the way, the person who wants to find out something is the one that ties the spiritualist. He can tie the ropes as tight as he wants to and make as many knots as he pleases. The funny part of it is that it is just like the showmen with handcuffs,—the knots sometimes are still tied just like the person who wanted the information tied them originally,—although sometimes the spirit bunched the ropes all up in a mess. The whole tent shakes, too, and the skeptics look real hard, but the spirit will mock them by saying: 'Well, you need not look because you can't see anything anyway!'"

787 In conclusion I think we can say that the rite fits into the general ceremonial pattern of the Gros Ventres, but it was the only ceremony in which the shaking tent was involved. The

GROS VENTRE SHAKING TENT

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spiritualist, either man or woman, was approached in the same way as any other "medicine" or "holy" person when it was desired that they exercise their power. For this particular type of clairvoyance the power consisted in control over the spirit of a deceased relative, rather than some other kind of supernatural being. The spirit was invoked by a song learned from the spirit at the time the power was acquired, just as in other cases among the Gros Ventres the being bestowing power gave instructions as to procedure to the recipient. It is characteristic of the seance, however, that there was no set formula beyond the song and the questions could be framed by either the spiritualist or the seeker after information; while the answers were given by the spirit in ordinary language, understood by all, and the spirit made comments appropriate to the particular situation. Whether the regular lodge or a small separate structure were used, whether the Houdini trick was involved, and whether the spirit chose to eat or smoke, seem to be variable features which were employed according to circumstances, and perhaps according to instructions for carrying out the rite received by the individual spiritualist from the spirit along with the song.

THE SHAKING TENT RITE AMONG PLAINS
AND FOREST ALGONQUIANS

JOHN M. COOPER

The Catholic University of America

121 THE purpose of the present paper is to bring together and
114 make available some scattered field notes on the conjuring
and "shaking tent" complex of northern North America, a sub-
ject that has recently evoked a good deal of discussion, particu-
larly in the valuable interpretative monographs of Ray and
Hallowell.¹ The data to be presented are from the Algonquian-
speaking Montagnais, Cree, Ojibwe, Blood-Blackfoot, and Gros
Ventres (of Montana), and the Siouan-speaking Assiniboiné.
Only certain high-light features of the Montagnais, Cree, and
Ojibwe rite will be mentioned; the complete field data gathered
by the writer will be given in monographs to be published later.
On the Blood-Blackfoot, Gros Ventres, and Assiniboiné, my field
data will be given here in full. Information obtained on the
Blood-Blackfoot and Assiniboiné shaking tent rite is very frag-
mentary. It was gotten under conditions that did not leave time
or opportunity for detailed investigation. Leisurely field work
on this item among these people would in all probability net a
much ampler yield. Information on the Gros Ventre rite is much
fuller, but, even so, is probably not exhaustive.

GROS VENTRE RITE

114 It was in 1931 during a very brief one-day reconnaissance
● 787 visit to the Fort Belknap Reservation that the writer first heard
of the shaking tent rite among the Gros Ventres, from a group

¹ V. F. Ray, Historic backgrounds of the conjuring complex in the
Plateau and the Plains, in L. Spier et al., ed., *Language, culture, and per-
sonality: Essays in memory of Edward Sapir*, Menasha, Wis., 1941, 204-16,
bibl. 215-16; A. L. Hallowell, *The role of conjuring in Saulteaux so-
ciety*, Publ., Philadelphia anthropological society, v. 2, Phila., 1942, incl.
bibl. pp. 89-96.

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of men, including Stiff Arm, a noted Gros Ventre medicine ¹¹⁴ man, who has since died. Only a few details were obtained: the ⁷⁸⁷ rite within a regular tepee with spectators present; the tying of the performer with ropes, his escape therefrom, and after his escape the ropes in a ball which could not be untied; the summoning of the spirit of the deceased relative by the performer; the shaking of the tent "as in a cyclone" when the spirit came; talking "from above" by the spirit; singing by the performer and by the others in the tepee.

Later in August-September, 1939 and 1940, fuller information on the shaking tent rite was secured in connection with a general study of Gros Ventre society and religion, from The Boy and Thick, two of the older and best informed men among the Gros Ventres. These fuller data here follow.

Spiritual helpers among the Gros Ventres were of two kinds, ghosts of deceased persons and beings who had never been men. ^[776] The latter, the ordinary guardian spirits, by far the more common, do not concern us here as they do not enter at all into the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite. Only ghosts so enter.

A ghost helper, *tsatsawâ'a* (-â- and superior a nasalized), ⁷⁷⁶ was usually acquired in the following way. It was not sought by ⁷⁸⁷ fasting and crying out on the hills, the customary procedure for acquiring non-ghostly guardian spirits and power. In fact there was either no quest of any kind or at most a somewhat indirect one. The usual sequence was as follows. A surviving relative would keep in his or her possession some memento or keepsake—something the deceased had prized greatly, some belonging such as a whip, or a tooth or bit of hair of the departed one. ^{[765} The keepsake was kept, not worn. It was kept not for the purpose of ^{768]} acquiring the ghost of the deceased relative (a father or other close relative), but solely or at least chiefly, so far as I could gather, out of regard for the departed.

In most cases where such mementos were kept nothing happened. In some few cases, however, the keeping led to the acquisition of a ghost helper by the keeper. The first intimations the keeper had of the intentions of the deceased relative were knockings, or whistlings, or other kinds of disturbance around

- 787 where the memento was kept. After a while the ghost would
 776 come to the keeper, the surviving relative, on successive visits and talk to him (or her), telling him its intention of becoming his ghost helper, and finally putting him in a deep sleep ("killing" him) and saying to him: "I shall be your *tsatsawâ*¹." In other words, it was the ghost, not the surviving relative, who regularly took the initiative and broke the ice. In fact, the latter had little or no freedom to accept or refuse.

By the ghost the survivor in trance would be taught the procedure to use for summoning and dealing with the ghost, how to put incense in the smudge place in the person's own lodge, how to lay the pipe, the direction of stem and bowl, what kind of food to put out, and so forth. A key element in such teaching was a special song, given by the ghost to be sung in said rite. One
 776 such song, recorded by me in 1940 as sung by The Boy but not
 787 yet transcribed, a wordless song sung to the accompaniment of a
 791 drum, had belonged to a woman named "Woman." She had
 [533] been taught it by the ghost of her deceased husband (or brother), *Wawathana'tea* * (*a*'s nasalized) "Bad-bad Bull." He had been a medicine man when still living, and this had been his "power" song. His ghost gave it to her both as the song to summon his ghost with and as a doctoring song. She had therefore both ghost-summoning and doctoring power. While that old woman had both a ghost helper and doctoring power, the two things did not necessarily go together in the same person. One could have a ghost helper without having doctoring power, and vice versa. No one lacking a ghost helper could conduct the shaking tent rite, no matter how great power he had received by fasting and crying, and no matter what guardian spirit or spirits he had acquired. After her husband's death the above old woman had not married. People were a little afraid of her because she had this ghost helper. She was a capable old woman, with lots of horses; some of her breed of horses are still (1940) around. She died around 1907.

* Owing to delays and difficulties under present war conditions in obtaining symbols not in our printer's stock *a* and *e* with a stroke above them are here printed in *italic*.

SHAKING TENT AMONG ALGONQUIANS

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Other songs, distinct from this summoning or shaking tent rite song, were also given and taught at times by ghost helpers. Two of them, both victory songs, were recorded as sung by The Boy in 1940. These two were given on occasions other than that on which the surviving relative initially acquired his ghost helper. 776
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[533]

After all the above teaching was concluded, the ghost of the deceased relative belonged to the survivor and was supposed to come whenever summoned by the latter in the manner the ghost told him while in trance to do. A great many Gros Ventre men and women had guardian spirits and "power" acquired by fasting and crying or otherwise. But fewer individuals, men and women, had ghost helpers. My informants in 1939 and 1940 could recall only four persons in the last two generations or last 70 years or so who had had ghost helpers.

In one case (see first of the two appended stories by Thick) two spirits tried to come to the shaking tent rite conducted by Woman, one bad and the other good, but whether the bad one was one of her deceased relatives or not, she never knew. The people were under the impression that the bad one was an intruder who used to come first and try to "horn in" on the proceedings. No case of a given person clearly having more than one ghost helper was recalled by my informants.

Ordinary "power" could be and often was transferred by the possessor to another person by donation or bequeathment. But a ghost helper never was so transferred and could not be. [424]

It may be added that neither my informants, The Boy and Thick, nor my interpreter, Thomas Main, all highly intelligent and informed men, were at all sure of the etymology of the word *tsatsawâ'â*. The Boy thought it might connote the meaning of "slave," "some one who is forced to do things." Thomas Main suggested a possible relationship to *tsatsa*—"coming, flight"; plus—*wa*, an old Gros Ventre word, meaning unknown. The two words for ordinary ghosts as such are *tsa-k'â* (sing.; pl., *tsa-k'an*: *a's* as *u* in English but), and *bie'te'* (sing.; pl. *bi'eten*). *Tsatsawâ'â* is used exclusively for ghost helpers, not for an ordinary ghost, or ghosts in general. An ordinary medicine man was called *nata'nhehi* (*a's* as *u* in but), but there was no special name 791
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791 in use to designate those who had a ghost helper: of him or her
 787 it was merely said: "He (or she) has a *tsatsawâ'a*."

Persons who had a ghost helper commanded great respect, and were bothered by no one. But capable medicine men on whom the people depended to doctor their sick were also greatly respected. My informants did not feel that either class of practitioners as such had greater prestige than the other.

787 In the shaking tent rite, no other spirits than the given ghost
 776 had any part, and only the one ghost ever had part in a given performance. Neither guardian spirits, nor the "Little Spirit," nor *Ba'a'*, nor the Supreme Being (*I'tcib'n'a't'*; the *a* before *t* nasalized) enters into it in any manner. The summoned ghost came not from any of these or their abodes, but from *Basna'be'e*, [775] the Big Sand, whither the souls of all Gros Ventres, except murderers of their own tribesmen, went after death and lived.

The function of the ghost helper was to give knowledge about past, present, future, or distant happenings, and counsel and direction in illness or danger. He imparted information. He did not as such grant power. Some of the many things he would be questioned about were: How a war expedition under way or an impending battle, or an illness, would come out? Where were the enemy located and what were their plans? Who had stolen a certain valuable article and where was it? He was not asked questions about trivial or silly matters, or about the fidelity or infidelity of a wife, although he sometimes volunteered information on such things. If some noted or loved person were critically ill, the ghost helper might be summoned and if it said: "His (the sick person's) soul is already over there," this meant he was going to die.

787 Where the services of one who had a ghost helper were desired,
 791 the usual procedure was for the client or clients to go to him (or her) and offer him a pipe to smoke—this in accordance with general Gros Ventre practice in enlisting the aid of anyone with any kind of power. Those who had ghost helpers were commonly reluctant or even afraid to summon their helper; after the performance they felt tired and sore. But if given a pipe to call the

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ghost, they could not refuse, at least not easily. And if they accepted the pipe, they committed themselves definitely. 787 ●
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The summoning rite was performed only at night, with the fire out, regardless of the severity of the weather, and in darkness. In the two narratives by The Boy appended infra the ghost helper spoke in the daytime, but had been summoned the preceding night. The rite was ordinarily performed in the performer's lodge, he being hidden out of sight of the clients or spectators behind a blanket-curtain hung up for this purpose to partition off a segment of the lodge. Away from the camp, the rite was sometimes performed in an emergency shelter or a sweat lodge. Before the rite, the clients got ready a pipe and tobacco, a dish of puppy meat (an earlier Gros Ventre delicacy), and other food. [262] and at the appointed time for the rite brought these to the lodge of the ghost-possessor.

The performer was then bound with thongs. The four fingers (thumb too?) of each hand were tied tightly together by interlacing them (somewhat after the technique of wrapped or twined basketry), the hands were tied behind the back, he was rolled in his blanket and tied around securely with thongs, with only his head protruding, and then was deposited behind the blanket partition out of sight of the spectators.

It appears to have been a common practice for the performer to challenge the most skeptical member of the party, and ask him to do the tying. Various stories of skeptics were narrated to me.

On one occasion when the main body of the Gros Ventres, then at war with the Piegan (or Blackfoot), were camped on the east side of Judas River and a small band of them on the west side, the ghost helper of one of the Gros Ventres in the small band told them: "Tell the people to leave this small camp and go across the river to the big one, for the enemy is going to raid tonight." But many of the Gros Ventres of the small band said: "Ghosts are big liars. We are not cowards to run." Of the skeptics many remained, while about half crossed back to the big camp. About dawn, the enemy came as the ghost had predicted and nearly all who had remained at the small camp were massacred.

On another occasion when the Gros Ventres had (or were

- 787 about to have) a big battle with the Crows at Marias (at the
776 junction of the Marias with the Missouri), a young man who was present at a ghost helper rite, with the fires out and pitch-darkness in the lodge, and who doubted that a ghost could come back, decided to experiment. When the ghost helper came and the noise was heard, the young man, who was sitting near the door in the darkness where no one else could see he was exposed, pushed his breechclout aside and exposed his genitals, saying to himself: "If this is really a ghost, he will see me and do something about it." All of a sudden the young man let out a yell as if hit by someone, and ran out of the lodge. "You had better run. What is being done here is the real thing," said the ghost to the young fellow, and added to the crowd: "I hit that young fellow's genitals sharply with a stick; that is why he dashed out of the lodge." They then asked the young man: "Is that what happened?" And he replied: "Yes. He hit me good and hard there," and he became a believer.

This emphasis on skeptics in non-narrative and narrative accounts of the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite would suggest that the rope-escaping feat, which we may call for short the "Houdini trick," had the purpose, overt or covert, of creating or confirming faith in the authenticity of the ghostly visitation.

The Houdini trick ordinarily formed part of the Gros Ventre shaking tent rite, but to judge from a couple of the stories appended to this paper, was not absolutely indispensable and could, in emergency, be omitted.

- 791 Right after being tied, the ghost-possessor to the accompani-
787 ment of his drum sang his summoning song which the ghost had
776 given him. As the ghost helper approached the lodge, a whistling as of wind could be heard, and sometimes at least an owl call,— owls and ghosts are closely associated in Gros Ventre thought, ghosts appearing or speaking as owls. As the ghost came through the top of the lodge, the top would shake violently, and then the whole lodge would shake.

The ghost would then go to the performer and blow on him, and all the sinews and thongs with which he was tied would become untied, and they would be rolled in a ball so knotted and

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tangled that it could not itself be easily unravelled and would so be thrown out at the spectators, or at the one who had done the tying, especially if he were a skeptic, with some such challenge to him from the ghost as: "You tied up this person. Now see if you can untangle this ball of thong."

Next the pipe would be lit and held up in the darkness in the direction where the ghost was supposed to be, for the ghost to smoke, and the spectators would see the pipe glow up rhythmically every time the ghost drew on it. The people in the lodge would finish smoking this pipe. After this the ghost would ask: "People, why did you send for me?" They would tell him what they wanted to know. If the ghost knew the answer offhand, he would answer at once. If he did not know, he would say: "I don't know. I'll go and find out. You sing that song again [the one the ghost taught the performer when he first chose the latter; no other song was sung] and I'll come back and tell you."

As soon as the ghost went out, a little fire would be made, and the spectators had a smoke. Then they put out the fire and sang the ghost song. They would not have to wait long, "for a ghost travels just about as fast as a man thinks." On returning it would give the information that had been sought of it.

Most ghosts talked a whistling talk. But some—those possessed by Plenty-dry-meat-old-man and by Morning-star, two old men whose ghost helpers were among the greatest ones remembered and whose prophecies always came true—talked just in a natural voice.

After the ghost helper had given the information desired (or perhaps earlier, after his smoke at the beginning; I could not clear up the point) he was offered the food that had been prepared. And the spectators, still in the dark, would hear the tapping of the ghost's fingernails on the plate or other sound of eating as the ghost partook of some of the food.

When he had finished eating, he would say something like: "If you are done with me, I shall go," and he would depart by way of the top of the tent, which would shake violently as it had done when the ghost first arrived in it. After the ghost helper had taken his final departure, the performer would come out

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PRIMITIVE MAN

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from behind the blanketed enclosure, the fire would be re-lighted, the performer would say the prayer customary among the Gros Ventres before all meals to the Supreme Being and other beings, then he or she and the others present would eat the food that had remained from the ghost's repast. Finally they would all sit around smoking and chatting a while before dispersing. I failed to gather any information on whether the performer receives any payment or not for his or her services in the rite.

Certain simplifications of the above procedure under emergency conditions as on war expeditions are noted or intimated in a couple of the following four narratives, the first two given by The Boy, the last two by Thick.

NARRATIVE 1

787 The following story was told by The Boy.

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" A certain man had his deceased father as his ghost helper.

539 The ghost helper used to speak Gros Ventre just like living people but in a bass voice. Everybody understood him when they heard him.

" On one occasion the Gros Ventre tribe were camped near the forks of the Teton and Marias Rivers. While there a large group of the men decided to go on the warpath. So they left the main camp, went up the Missouri River and camped that first night at the mouth of Crow Creek where it empties into the Missouri River. When it was dark that night some of the men said: 'Let's offer the pipe to X [the one mentioned above who had the ghost helper; name not given] and ask him to find out whether our prospects on this war party are good or bad.' So they filled up a pipe and went to X, held out the pipe to him and asked him: 'Accept the pipe and call your spirit.'

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" X accepted willingly and soon after they had smoked the pipe together they made a shelter where X was to do the spirit-rite. So they tied up X, filled the pipe again, put it there and sang a song four times. When they were singing it the fourth time they heard a voice in the air. The ghost helper arrived and the shelter shook as a lodge would have done in the same rite. When the spirit hit the ground, the ground shook too. The spirit

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seemed excited and kept repeating: 'What do you want, my children?' and added: 'If you were in my place and were as old and feeble as I am, you wouldn't like to be disturbed. But here I am. What do you want?' They answered: 'We want to know how this venture of ours is going to turn out,—well or badly.' Then they lit the pipe and offered it to the spirit and they could see from the rhythmic glaring of the pipe that the ghost helper was smoking. After he had smoked he replied: 'Well, I don't know offhand. I'll have to look around and investigate. I am going away to look around. While I am gone you smoke and after a while sing again and I'll come back.' The ghost helper went away with a noise and commotion as always.

"They sat around and smoked and after a while sang again. The ghost helper came back blowing as if catching his breath, as an old man does, and said: 'My children, Crow Indians without number are invading the camp you just left. Knowing you men are away they are so bold that they are peeping into the lodges at your women and watching them playing the hand game. Your women are in happy mood. These Crow Indians seem to be preparing to take all the Gros Ventre horses. I shall go back and watch to see what they will do. Meanwhile you do as you did before: sit around and smoke and then sing. I'll come back and make a final report.' And so they talked and smoked and sang.

"Then the ghost helper came back bringing with him one hair from the head of a Crow. This was not a scalp but was only a hair representing a scalp and was wrapped around a piece of sagebrush. It was brought to convince the Gros Ventres there was no danger. Then the ghost helper reported: 'The Crows have taken practically all your horses and about sun-up will arrive where you now are. You need have no fear of the Crows provided you do just one thing. Be sure to kill the Crow with the blue blanket coat (with hood). He is the one brave man in the crowd. Kill him first and you will kill all the others. None of the Gros Ventres will be actually killed, but two of them will be wounded. In case you do not kill the Crow with the blue coat the outcome of the battle will be doubtful. But if you kill the

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787 Crow with the blue coat you will kill all the Crows and get your
 776 horses back.' The Gros Ventres asked the ghost helper which
 539 two of their party would be wounded, but were not told by the
 ghost helper. If they had been told they would not have let
 these two go into battle.

"By the time they were through with the spirit it was near
 daylight. So they decided not to go to sleep but to wait up the
 rest of the night. [Here followed a long detailed description of
 the battle with the Crows beginning around daylight.] The
 Crow with the blue coat escaped. Of the sixty Crows in all,
 forty were killed. No Gros Ventres were killed, but two were
 wounded—two members of my own [The Boy's] clan. While
 the party was still at the war camp, some distance from the
 main camp, the ghost helper came and said: 'I came to hear the
 news. Did you kill the man with the blue coat?' They an-
 swered: 'No.' The ghost helper said: 'It is your own fault. If
 you had, you would have killed all the Crows. But anyhow you
 did well and have done yourselves credit. I am going to teach
 [727] you a victory song so you can sing it when you get back to camp.'
 So he taught them this victory song² and they learned it and he
 said to them: 'Well, my children, I am going home. When I get
 back to my place of abode I will celebrate that victory too. I
 will give you charcoal [it was the custom for returning victors to
 paint themselves black] and I'll bring charcoal to my own land
 and celebrate.'

"The foregoing incident happened in the time of my [The
 Boy's] grandfather, Crow Moccasin."

NARRATIVE 2

The story which here follows was also told by The Boy.

"The Gros Ventres were camped east of (the site of) Lewis-
 town (south of the Missouri River). A party of Gros Ventre
 warriors left the camp to go on the warpath against the Sioux.
 One of this Gros Ventre party was known to have a ghost helper.

² This song as sung by The Boy was recorded in the field in 1940, to-
 gether with about 120 other Gros Ventre songs, but I have not found it pos-
 sible, as yet, to get any of the records transcribed for publication.

SHAKING TENT AMONG ALGONQUIANS

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The party traveled north and when they arrived at the river they camped there. Some of the men said: 'Morning-star-appears for Morning-star-is-up: the man with the ghost helper) should be approached to find out what our prospects are on this expedition.' It was agreed among themselves that they would make a sweat lodge. 797
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"Among those invited to sweat was Morning-star-appears. While they were sweating they offered the pipe to him to get him to call his helper. He agreed. Then they all smoked and got ready in the sweat lodge. [797]

"The ghost helper came to the sweat lodge for the possessor was right there. Just before the helper alighted he whistled violently and rapidly. Then the sweat lodge shook and they heard the ghost helper say: 'What do you want? Why did you call me?' They said: 'We are going on the warpath after the Sioux. What success will we have? Is there any danger?' So they offered the lighted pipe to the ghost helper and saw it smoked by him. After smoking, the ghost helper said: 'I'll go and see first before I answer. You go ahead and smoke and after a while sing again.' This they did.

"The ghost helper came back in the usual way, and highly elated, and said: 'All right, I am ready to tell you. First here is a strand of hair of a man (a Sioux) whom you will kill tomorrow. This represents his scalp.' It was wrapped around sagebrush. He continued: 'I have found a big Sioux camp on Beaver Creek [east of the Little Rocky Mountains]. The Sioux are having a big Grass Dance. The one who is having the most fun is the one you are to kill tomorrow. He is a handsome man and has a sword. You will capture that sword when you kill him. Don't be afraid. No Gros Ventre will be killed but two of you Gros Ventres don't look good to me.' They said to the ghost helper: 'Name the two.' But he refused to do so, saying: 'Just don't be afraid. Go ahead to the place where the Sioux are and attack them. Choose now what kind of weather you wish after the fight tomorrow, and I will see that the weather will be that way.' They failed, however, to make a choice. The ghost helper also said: 'Every once in a while tomorrow take

787 a look at the sun. There will be all kinds of sundogs tomorrow.
 776 changing every little while. When they appear you will know
 539 that I have told you the truth.'

"Then the ghost helper left and the Gros Ventres slept until early morning. [Here followed a long description by The Boy of the battle.] Just one Sioux was killed in the battle, a very handsome man with a sword, as the ghost helper had predicted. Likewise they saw the sundogs changing. The Gros Ventres, however, after this first skirmish realized that the Sioux would soon get reorganized and that their own situation was perilous. So they called on Morning-star-appears to cause such weather that the Sioux could not catch them. He sang his song, using his robe as a cover in which to enclose himself, and said: 'We wish rain.' At once a cloud appeared and in a short time grew into a great black storm cloud; then came a perfect cloudburst, with thunder and lightning, in which you couldn't see any distance. Under this cover the Gros Ventres escaped from the pursuing Sioux and got back to camp safely with no loss of life, although two of their number had had narrow escapes, just as the ghost helper had said: 'Two of you do not look good to me.'

"The above occurred in Stiff Arm's time, when he was a young man. The man who killed the Sioux was Crazy Bull. I do not recall the name of the ghost helper, but this same ghost helper on this occasion taught the Gros Ventres a song to use in their celebration after the victory."

NARRATIVE 3

787 The following two stories were told me by Thick.
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"A certain old woman (her great-great-grandchild is still living) had a ghost helper. Her name was 'Woman' but for various reasons she was nicknamed 'Bear Old Woman.' When I was about ten years old a party of Gros Ventres was camped at Lodge Pole, about two miles from the Little Rocky Mountains. One night Cree enemies came and stole all the Gros

* This song as sung by The Boy was recorded in 1940.

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Ventres' horses except those belonging to one man. This man loaned out his horses as far as they would go around to four of the Gros Ventres who went in pursuit of the Cree. 787 539

"Then that evening two of the other men, one of them my father, approached Bear Old Woman. They filled up a pipe just as you do when you go to someone to doctor you, offered it to the old woman, and asked her to find out from her ghost helper who stole the horses and where they were. Bear Old Woman, who had quite a temper, got angry right away as usual and pushed the pipe away as a sign of refusal. Finally one of the young fellows there, a relative of hers, said: 'Well, let me smoke it,' to force her to accept. She angrily grabbed the pipe and had to go through with the rite. When she took the pipe she rubbed her hands on the ground and rubbed dust on the pipe and offered a prayer before smoking. The pipe was then smoked by her and by the two men who had approached her. 787 539 791 [782]

"Then they began to get things ready. They killed a puppy, singed its hair off at a fire, took its insides out without skinning, quartered it up and boiled it. They put the boiled meat on a plate and got ready some other kinds of food to give to the old woman. Then the two men filled up a pipe and they together with two other men and with a 'servant' went to Bear Old Woman's lodge. On arriving there they set down the plate of dog meat near the head of her bed, the pipe between the incense hearth and the lodge fire, and the other dishes between the lodge fire and the door. [262 252]

"When everything was arranged and Bear Old Woman was still sitting on her bed, she said: 'Whoever is the greatest unbeliever among you, come and tie me up.' One of the four volunteered. Then the old woman got up and went to a place just south of the head of the bed, to a little enclosure made by hanging up a blanket. He hobbled her four fingers (thumb too?) with sinew, interlacing it in and out of the four fingers of each hand. Then he tied her hands together behind her back and also hobbled her feet. She was lying on a robe. He gathered the robe around her and tied her with rawhide thongs until only her head stuck out of the robe. And so he left her lying on her

787 back. He returned to his place to the southeast of the old
539 woman and sat down.

791 " Then Bear Old Woman said: ' All right. Start to sing now.'
They sang four times without stopping, the song belonging to the
old woman's ghost helper. As they were singing the third time
they heard an owl and the old woman said: ' Don't receive *that*
spirit. He is bad. Continue singing.' So they continued and
just as they finished the fourth time the old woman said: ' That
is the one. Receive *that* spirit.' The people around heard these
two owls.

787 " When the second owl lighted on top of the lodge, the top
539 shook and the ghost helper spoke: ' What do you want me for?'
776 They said: ' We want you to tell us where our horses are and
who has them so we can find them.' The ghost helper answered:
' All right. I'll have to go look for them, but you go ahead and
smoke this pipe [the one lying near the incense hearth]. When
you have smoked up what is in the pipe, refill it and put it back
in the same place and wait.'

" They had barely started smoking when the ghost helper was
back again. So they just dumped out what was left in the pipe
and refilled it. The helper said: ' Never mind. I am hungry and
want to eat.' But they didn't mind him. The spirit then said:
' Your horses are not very far away from here. Your four
friends have already recaptured your horses and are bringing
them back.' He also said to my father: ' One of your horses
has a thick broad rawhide rope around his neck and is dragging
it, and that other man's mare's colt will play out on the trip back
home.'

" After the helper had said all this, the four men judged that
he was through, so they took the pipe and lit it and offered the
helper a smoke. The inside of the old woman's lodge was dark
as there was no fire. The helper took the pipe from their hands
and then they saw it light up rhythmically as a pipe does when
it is puffed, and after taking a few puffs the helper said to the
men: ' You smoke the rest. I am hungry and want to eat.'
They could hear him chewing on the dog meat inside where the
woman was. After a while the helper said to the men: ' Here,

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You can eat the rest of this pup.' The meat had been eaten off of one hind leg of the pup so that just the bones were left. Then the ghost helper said: 'I see this foolish old woman lying here helpless.' Then they heard a noise as if the helper had struck the old woman with the flat of his hand and he was heard blowing. The next instant the ghost helper said: 'Here, try to untie this,' and the knotted sinew and rawhide thong hit the chest of the man who had tied her up. 787
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Then they heard the old woman give a long sigh. She had been in a trance all this time and was just coming out of it. Next the ghost helper said: 'Now I am going to leave you.' And they heard the same racket at the top of the lodge they had heard when he first came in and there was a violent shaking of the whole lodge, especially at the top of it. [791]

After the ghost helper was gone they kindled the fire again and there was light. Bear Old Woman came out of the enclosure and sat down on the bed and prayed with the bowls of food in her hand. Then she and the men ate and afterwards sat around and smoked and chatted. Then the men went home and told what the spirit had said. [791]

Next morning all the people in the camp, including the children, got up early and went up on the highest nearby ground to look for the four men coming back with the horses. Towards evening of the day the four Gros Ventres who had gone in pursuit of the thieves brought all the horses back, except the one which, as the spirit had said, had played out and could not stand the trip back. And one of my father's horses had a rope around its neck as the ghost helper had said it had. The pursuers had caught up with the Cree and surprised them asleep in a little swamp covered with grass and brush and so took the horses back home. On the return trip they got lost in a bad storm, went in the wrong direction and not until daylight did they discover their mistake and so had to circle their way back. They had neither eaten nor slept during all the two days and night they had been gone. 787
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The above incident occurred just at about the time when the buffalo disappeared from this part of the country [1880's]."

NARRATIVE 4

787 Here is the second story told me by Thick.

539 "There was a man by the name of Bird Child who had a ghost
791 helper. Bird Child's wife had four brothers, one of them my
father. One evening they filled a pipe and went to Bird Child's
lodge to get him to find out from his ghost helper where there
would be lots of buffalo and no danger, so they could go there
and hunt. When they arrived at Bird Child's lodge they found
him absent and only his wife in the lodge. Without invitation
they made themselves at home and asked their sister where Bird
Child was. She answered: 'I don't know where he is not when
he will be back.'

737 "Being Bird Child's brothers-in-law they decided to take the
776 liberty of using Bird Child's power and ghost helper, and of hav-
539 ing a seance in his absence. They asked their sister where Bird
607 Child's bundle was. She showed them. One of the four brothers
took it down. They then agreed who was to be tied up and to
represent Bird Child. The one of the four designated agreed.
They had him lie down and two of them tied him up tight and
laid him in an enclosure made along the side of the tent [as in
preceding story]. They were half-fooling, not quite serious.
Their sister couldn't say anything; they imposed on her. They
even attached the man's hair to the ropes with which they bound
him in the robe until only his mouth was visible.

"Then they started to sing and sang the same song four times
without stopping. At the end they heard yelling in the air and
said: 'There he is. He has come for us.' As the ghost helper ar-
rived the tent shook and the helper said: 'Who's that lying back
there?' and answered himself: 'Some crazy man or someone
with no regard for anybody's rights.' Then they heard a commo-
tion behind the enclosure. The bound brother started to hollow
for mercy. Next one of the brothers who had done the tying got
hit with all the ropes tangled in a knot.

"Then they heard the bound man being thrown towards the
door, and saying: 'Hurry up and make a light before this ghost
helper kills me.' The spirit had picked him up and was trying

SHAKING TENT AMONG ALGONQUIANS

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to wedge him between the poles in the lodge. By this time, however, the other brothers had kindled a fire and of course as soon as the flame flared up the spirit was gone. The ghost helper was good and mad, but anyhow had come."

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BLACKFOOT-BLOOD RITE

On a casual visit to Browning, Montana, in August, 1931, the writer was given some information by Mrs. Frances (Joseph) Brown of Browning on the Blackfoot shaking tent rite. The rite is performed by a woman who is a sort of "spiritualist" or "medium," as Mrs. Brown put it. She summons the dead spirits [spirit?] and they come and answer questions. Only she can understand the language of the dead spirits and can converse with them. She tells their answers to the other people who are around. During the rite, people are all around in the tipi. A curtain is put over a part of the interior of the tipi, and the "medium" sits behind the curtain. The lights are extinguished. Food is put on a plate. During the rite noises are heard "inside" [apparently behind the curtain], and everything moves, including the tent itself. It was emphasized to me that this rite is an old Indian one, not a modern intrusion of white spiritualistic seances.

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While talking with The Boy (Gros Ventre) in August 1940 about the Gros Ventre ghost helper complex, he told me the following story that his friend, Platted Hair, a Blood from Canada, had told him on a visit to him some time before:

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A long time ago, before the Gros Ventres came and when the Snakes still occupied this part of the country, a large party of Bloods came over toward the Little Rockies and never returned to their home country. Their people at home did not know what to make of it. One of the Bloods in the home camp had a ghost helper. So they gave this Blood a pipe to summon his ghost helper. When the ghost arrived, he asked: "Why did you send for me?" They said: "Our young men went on a war party and did not return. What has happened to them?" The ghost said: "I'll go and see. You may sing the song. I'll come back and I may be able to tell you what has happened." So the

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944

80 Assiniboine NF4 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13 ●
Blackfoot NF6 Montagnais NH6
Ojibwa NG6
PRIMITIVE MAN Cree NG4

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the Têtes-de-Boule and the Abitibi. Mikenak, an Oteipwe (-Algonkin) form, among the above listed Cree groups points to diffusion of the name,—not necessarily of this particular spokesman, as is evidenced by the Ft. Chipewyan Miskenak. Mistabeo, as spokesman among the above-listed Montagnais bands, is an independent non-human being or spirit, not a man's "other self" or kind of soul.

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The "Houdini trick," in which* the shaking tent performer escapes from the thongs with which he is tied, was found among the Cree of Ft. Chipewyan, McMurray, and Rocky Boy, the Oteipwe of Lake of the Woods, and the Oteipwe(-Algonkin) of Abitibi. This Abitibi occurrence marks the farthest eastern extension found by me of the trick in connection with the shaking tent. I did not learn of its use among the Oteipwe of the upper Albany River at Ft. Hope and Osnaburgh, though fairly extensive information on the shaking tent rite was obtained at these two localities in 1927. The "Houdini trick" is definitely lacking among the James Bay Cree, the Têtes-de-Boule, and the Montagnais groups studied.

Some further general and specific characteristics of the Montagnais-Cree-Oteipwe shaking tent rite will be given in the next section of the present paper.

GENERALIZATIONS

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The following generalizations are based partly on the foregoing data, partly on the writer's still unpublished fuller field notes on the Montagnais, Cree, and Oteipwe(-Algonkin).

Certain characters are common to the rite as practised both among the forest Montagnais-Cree-Oteipwe and Plains Cree and among the Gros Ventres and—so far as our fragmentary infor-

*Father R. Déléage, O.M.I., Letter of Nov. 1, 1863, in Rapport sur les missions du diocèse de Québec, Mar., 1864, no. 16, pp. 74-75, reported the "Houdini trick" in connection with the shaking tent rite among, apparently, the Grand Lake Victoria Oteipwe(-Algonkin)-speaking Indians.

*It was earlier reported among the Cree of York Factory, by Thomas M'Keever, A voyage to Hudson's Bay during the summer of 1812, London 1819, 58.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944

Assiniboine NF4 NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13 ●
 Cree NG4 Montagnais NH6
 Blackfoot NF6 Ojibwa NG6

SHAKING TENT AMONG ALGONQUAINS

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mation goes—the Blackfoot-Blood and Ft. Belknap Assiniboine. These common features are: shaking of the top of the tent or lodge at entrance and departure of spirit; entrance and departure of spirit by way of top of lodge; departure, during rite, of spirit after being questioned, to find facts, and subsequent return to tent with desired answer; performer not possessed by spirit, but spirit(s) speak(s) to or in presence of performer; performer concealed from sight of spectators and clients during visitation by spirit(s); no trance or ecstasy by performer, and performers not of psychopathic personality as such; spirits summoned primarily to obtain through them knowledge, chiefly knowledge hidden by barriers of time (future) and space (distance), or counsel on practical problems; a smoke given the spirit(s), and spectators smoke; absence of direct participation of Supreme Being in rite (apart from a minor exception or two); rite as such concerned with personal beings, not with impersonal forces, and thus a religious, not a magical rite (as many define religion and magic).

In certain features, the rite among the forest Montagnais-Cree-Otcipwe and Plains Cree consistently differs from that among the Gros Ventre, Blackfoot-Blood and Ft. Belknap Assiniboine. In the rite as found among the former: while one of the spirits is usually the chief informant or spokesman, other spirits and beings ordinarily come into the tent during the rite; all these spirits and beings are animistic, not manistic—never ghosts; humor, joking, trivial banter by the visiting spirit common; the "Houdini trick" absent from Montagnais and eastern Cree rite; food is not offered to the visiting beings.

On the other hand, in the rite as found among the Gros Ventres and, so far as our limited information goes, the Blackfoot-Blood and Ft. Belknap Assiniboine: one spirit only comes into the tent; the spirit that is summoned is exclusively a ghost, a deceased relative of the performer; humor, joking, trivial banter by the ghost are lacking; the "Houdini trick" is customary, except in emergency; food, especially the delicacy, puppy meat, is offered to and partaken of by visiting ghost.

So far as my information goes, among the above Montagnais-

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944

Assiniboine NF4
Blackfoot NF6

NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13
Montagnais NH6
Ojibwa NG6
PRIMITIVE MAN Cree NG4

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Cree-Otcipwe, the power to summon the shaking tent spirit(s) is not thrust upon the person by any spirit, as in a great measure it is among the Gros Ventres.

In general, the shaking tent rite appears to have much more relative importance and to play a much more preponderant role in the total magico-religious life of the Montagnais-Cree-Otcipwe than of the Gros Ventres, Blackfoot-Blood and Assiniboine.

That there is a historical relationship between the two above contrasted shaking tent complexes appears very probable from the many specific and distinctive elements they share in common and from the almost continuous geographical distribution of the complexes, a distribution moreover predominantly among the main body of Algonquian-speaking peoples of the taiga and adjacent open country and the aberrant-Algonquian-speaking groups of the Plains, the Gros Ventres, the Blackfoot, and the Cheyenne.

ADDENDUM ON WIDER DISTRIBUTION

It has not been the purpose of the present paper to deal with the total distribution of the shaking tent rite and with the historical problems connected with such distribution. The following summary notes are added merely to contribute a mite toward filling out the picture of distribution as given in Ray's historical study and Hallowell's socio-psychological one.⁸

In the east, the shaking tent is not reported in our published sources, to my knowledge, south of the St. Lawrence. The record by Maurault for the Abnaki does not mention shaking of the conjurer's tent.⁹ Inquiries by the writer in the field in 1931 among the Chipewyan and Dogrib of the Mackenzie-Slave watershed brought consistently negative results; in fact informants who knew well and gave many details of the rite as practised among the Cree of Ft. McMurray (Athabaska R.) and Ft. Chipewyan (L. Athabaska), on the Cree-Chipewyan borderline, and who were equally familiar with both Cree and Chipewyan

⁸ Ray, 1941; Hallowell, 1942. See footnote 1.

⁹ J. A. Maurault, *Histoire des Abénakis depuis 1605 jusqu'à nos jours*, Québec, 1866, 30.

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culture, emphasized that the shaking tent rite was practised by the Cree only, and not by the Chipewyan, even in these border areas when the two peoples were in very close contact and association. 787 ●
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To the far north, however, the "Houdini trick" and the shaking of the conjurer's hut on the arrival of his spiritual helper was earlier reported by Boas among the Central Eskimos.¹⁰ Lowie has also recorded among the Crow a tent-shaking rite very like that of the Gros Ventres and Cheyenne.¹¹ The first report and discussion, by Donald Collier, of the Kiowa occurrence is published in the present issue of *Primitive Man*. Regina Flannery has called my attention to the occurrence of the shaking-of-the-tent motif among the early Creek.¹²

Still farther afield, I have come across no reference to a shaking tent element in the many accounts of northern Asiatic and Lapp shamanism, but have made no thorough systematic search. In South America, I know of only one instance of a somewhat similar rite, that earlier reported among the Chiquitoan Manasi of eastern Bolivia. Part of the large public assembly hall was curtained off with mats, which part was reserved for the "high priest" alone and the visiting spirits. As the gods or spirits came down, a sound filled the air and shook the roof of the building and the mats. Chicha and food were offered the spirits. The people sang. The gods were consulted by the "high priest" about future events such as rains, harvests, fishing and hunting, whereabouts of game, outcome of prospective war raids,—the conversation being audible to the crowd outside the curtained compartment. The gods on departing shook the whole building as they ascended.¹³

¹⁰ F. Boas, *The central Eskimo*, BAE-R 6 for 1884-85, Washington, 1888, 393-94.

¹¹ R. H. Lowie, *The religion of the Crow Indians*, AMNH-AP, v. 25, pt. 2, 1922, 380-81; same, *The Crow Indians*, New York, 1935, 70-71.

¹² Captain Bossu, *Travels through . . . Louisiana*, tr., London, 1771, 1: 264-65, among the Allibamon (Alabama).

¹³ A. Métraux, *The social organization and religion of the Moje and Manasi*, in *Primitive Man*, 1943, 16: 22-23.

6: Cooper E-5 (1931-1940) 1944

NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13 ●

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PRIMITIVE MAN

● 787 The more distant of the above instances, those from the
171 Eskimo and Creek and from the Manasi of South America are
merely set down here as of record. We are not justified—as yet
—in assuming historical relationship. The distances seem too
great, and the resemblances too vague and generic. What future
more complete descriptive and distributional information may
suggest remains to be seen.

INDIVIDUAL VARIATION IN CULTURE

Regina Flannery

It is generally accepted that what Benedict called the Dionysian configuration of Plains culture represents a dominant, if not the only trend. By definition a configuration is a generalization lying behind and explaining a number of cultural patterns. A pattern itself is of course an abstraction from the behavior of a number of individuals. The behavior of any one person may vary at different times in respect to a particular type of situation, but it is unlikely that the individual will show the whole range of possible behavior within a pattern; it will cover only a portion thereof. As Linton pointed out, the difference between the individual mode within this segment, and the mode of the behaviors on which the pattern is based, reflects the compromise which every individual has to make between the culture patterns of his society and his own inclinations. It would seem further, then, that if the modes of an individual's behavior-ranges show a consistent displacement with respect to a large series of patterns, it is safe to assume that the direction of this displacement reflects some quality of the individual.¹ The question we wish to raise is this: If the aspect of personality thus revealed runs counter to a dominant trend of his culture, is the individual a misfit in that society? (21)

In attempting an answer, let us examine some individual variations within those patterns of Plains culture in which expression of emotional excess, and dangerous experience were expected of women in one Plains society, that of the Gros Ventres of Montana. We shall outline in some detail the behavior of one Gros Ventre woman in respect of these selected patterns—from which the Dionysian configuration was abstracted—and contrast her behavior with that of others of approximately the same age. All had participated as adults in the old way of life before the disappearance of the buffalo in 1887. [181]

In Gros Ventre culture, as in all the Plains, there was high valuation placed on direct contact of the individual with the supernatural through dreams and visions. Men could actively seek such contact by employing dangerous means, and did so in order to obtain many kinds of power. While women did not go on the actual power quest, they might acquire medicine powers and less frequently, perhaps, powers of clairvoyance. Medicine powers were considered dangerous in that, it was believed, by accepting them a limitation was put upon the life span of the practitioner. But the rewards in terms of prestige for successful performance and of payment for services were high for women as well as for men. Not every individual man was successful in his quest, nor of course was every woman vouchsafed the kinds of dreams which were requisite. Coming Daylight, the woman whose behavior we are examining in particular, was what her contemporaries considered fortunate indeed in having been offered curing powers of several kinds. Nevertheless she rejected the possibility each time, in spite of the fact that she had a living example in the person of her father's sister of what it could mean in prestige to a woman who accepted. As the reasons for her refusal seem significant I shall describe her experience in her own words. 787
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[55] "My experience was by dreaming. One time before I was married—I must have been about eight years old—I was sleeping in a big lodge and a 'person' came and wakened me. He had a bag of medicines on his back. He came to me on four successive nights and laid out these medicines and told me what each was for. On the third of these nights there was a man lying there—he was just skin and bones. The 'person' who had awakened me told me: 'You could take all these medicines and you could cure people like that one lying there' [i.e., a person in the last extremity]. In my dream I would do everything he told me, manipulate my hands to draw out the sickness, and do everything. But I didn't want that power and would tell him so. Each morning too I would relate to my grandmother exactly what had happened in the night but she would try to hush me up, telling me: 'Don't say anything; don't tell anyone. You will be a great medicine woman.' But I didn't want that power. I didn't like it because when medicine people suck on the weak part of the sick person they have to swallow what they extract. I had decided I would rather be quiet and not do anything like that, or sacrifice my flesh, or things of that kind. Perhaps if it had come later I might have taken that power and become great."

Nevertheless when later in life she had other dreams indicating supernatural power, she likewise refused. She explained in regard to one of these experiences, for instance: "The one who awakened me this time had told me to face the rising sun and was showing me how to make a smudge from the moss that grows close on logs; but I told him. 'No. I would rather not have it.' Those who have power die too soon."

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Incidentally, still in connection with curing, bleeding was an operation which was performed purely as a natural remedy for a person who felt dizzy or sluggish. Anyone could do it—no supernatural validation was needed. Other women described quite casually how it was done and discussed the various times they had actually performed the operation. Coming Daylight, however, insisted that while there was really nothing to such an operation, she could never bring herself to perform it, nor would she allow anyone else to bleed her; she could not stand the sight of blood.

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The aversion to the sight of blood and to self-mutilation was evidently deep-seated and showed itself in a marked manner early in her life. On one occasion a close relative was very ill. In such a situation it was expected that every member of the family would rally around and do whatever he could toward the recovery. Among the things that fell within the scope of activity for female relatives was that of vowing to sacrifice something valuable, including perhaps the blood from one's arm or a finger-joint, if the person recovered. At this particular time, Coming Daylight was a young child, and her grandmother decided that it would be appropriate for the little girl to offer that her finger-tip be removed if the relative regained his health. When it was suggested to her, Coming Daylight refused, even though her grandmother took after her with a stick. She actually ran away and wandered alone, until two nights later the relative died and an uncle finally found her.

On another occasion in her early youth, too, she defied a convention connected with kinship by refusing to join in mourning for an uncle who had been killed in revenge for having instigated the murder of his brother's wife. When her grandmother upbraided Coming Daylight for not expressing grief in the traditional manner, the latter defied her by saying: "I am not going to cry for that man. I don't know why you are crying for him. I have worked for that woman and she has fed me, and has even given me meat to bring home to you. I heard

159 Her final rejoinder was such a witty and pointed one that everyone laughed
598 heartily at her rival's expense. In this culture, of course, public ridicule was a
626 far more effective retaliation than the biting and scratching that other women
said frankly they would have indulged in when attacked.

159 Expression of emotional excess was institutionalized for the Gros Ventres, as
765 for the rest of the Plains, in the bereavement situation. Upon the death of a
183 husband, son, or father, a woman was expected to start wailing as soon as she
[764] heard the news, have her hair cut off, discard good clothes for old ragged ones,
gash her arms and legs, go to the hills to mourn and cry, resisting for a time the
pleas of her relatives to return, and being watched lest she attempt suicide.
Coming Daylight was only a young woman when she was first widowed and
the mourning pattern was still in full vogue. It is certain from other evidence
than Coming Daylight had a deep affection for this husband to whom she had
been given as a child-bride and in whose kindly and indulgent treatment she
had found a pleasant escape from the rigorous discipline of her grandmother.
159 Nevertheless the public expression of her grief was minimal—no abandonment
765 for her. Although her sister was sent on the hills with her to keep watch over her
183 in the usual way, Coming Daylight was easily persuaded to return shortly
152 though she herself was proud of the fact that she had stayed out so long that she
[603] actually had got a frozen toe! In later years when all that was left of the
ritual was the wailing out on the hills, she lost the son whom she herself, and
everybody else, acknowledged as her favorite. She had not been on the hills
very long when she experienced a significant dream, as follows. She was in a
lodge at the rear of which was a big pile of tobacco mixture and a pipe. The
owner of the lodge filled the pipe and approached her. She was frightened
because she didn't smoke. The owner of the lodge however told her: "Look at
these people." She looked and saw many with their hair cut and their bodies
bleeding from the gashes inflicted in grief. The man then told her: "That is in
the past. Nowadays your only consolation is in smoking." So she accepted the
pipe and, after smoking it, she was painted in ceremonial fashion by each of
those other mourners. Then the owner of the lodge dismissed her saying:
"Now, go home and don't ever go on the hills and mourn again. But always
smoke if you want to." She went home right after this dream and when she told
her husband of it he accepted it as valid and persuaded her sister to prepare for
Coming Daylight her first real smoke. She maintained that the habit sub-
sequently developed was actually a great comfort to her.

726 The final area with which we shall be concerned here is the war complex—a
597 vital aspect of the old Plains culture. Gros Ventre women were allowed direct
82 but limited participation in these activities in the sense that, while they would
159 not join a party of men who were going on horse-raiding or revenge expeditions,
726 if opportunity offered they might exhibit the same kind of bravery that a man
562 should show and derive considerable status therefrom. For instance, if one of
the enemy fell nearby, the women rushed out from camp to count coup, and to
grab trophies with which to inaugurate the relationship known as "enemy-
159 friends." Coming Daylight, however, was never one to indulge in this sport.
726 She told of the one—and to her extremely distasteful—occasion on which her
562 hand literally was forced. It seems that during a raid on their camp one of the
enemy was shot and her husband scalped him. The victim was lying not far
from her lodge and, as her husband dashed off to pursue the rest of the Assini-
boine, he shouted for her to come out and see what was going on. Coming Day-
light saw the man lying there, face down, covered with blood. He was not dead